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About the Cover

TSR staff artist Rob Lazzaretti kindly provided to us his newest work, titled "The Death of Winter." Of course, we can't remember whether "Winter" is the name of the defiant elf archer down to her last arrow or the giant grasping the tree trunk that is just starting to show signs of breaking.

The Incantatrix

A new type of mage for the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting

by Eric L. Boyd

The information in this article is based on an article by Ed Greenwood in issue #90 of DRAGON® Magazine.

The Forgotten Realms are home to numerous practitioners of magic. Wizards and rogues are the sole practitioners of wizardly magic among humans and demi–humans, but there are many variations of these spellcasting professions, including spellsingers and shadow walkers (detailed in *Wizards and Rogues of the Realms*). Numerous specialists of different schools of magic practice their Art in the Realms, although all are rarer than the generalist mage or bard.

The major schools of magic studied by specialist wizards in the Realms include abjuration, conjuration/summoning, divination (greater and lesser), enchantment/charm, illusion/phantasm, invocation/evocation, and necromancy. Minor schools of magic developed more recently in the Realms include the schools of alchemy, geometry, shadow, and song (all detailed in the PLAYER'S OPTION™: *Skills and Powers* handbook) as well as the school of metamorphic magic (sketched out in PHBR4, *The Complete Wizard's Handbook*, pp. 22-32) and the schools of apportation (detailed in DRAGON Magazine #220) and oneiromancy (detailed in DRAGON Magazine #221). Even rarer are practitioners of wild magic and elemental magic (detailed in the *Tome of Magic*). A few elven mages in Evermeet still practice the ancient art of elven high magic (detailed in *Elves of Evermeet*, pp. 62-70).

Magic is a strange and wondrous force in the Realms, and even all these specialties do not describe the full breadth of spell casters in Faerun. This article details a school of magic unique to the Realms whose rare practitioners are near legend in the lore of the Realms.

The Incantatrix

An Incantatrix is a rare and mysterious type of wizard, weaker in many ways than some mages, who is adept at countering and negating the magics of other spellcasting creatures and individuals, and at dealing with creatures who exist simultaneously on more than one plane (such as certain undead). At the same time, incantatrixes are severely limited in their choice of offensive magics and are woefully weak in physical combat of any sort.

Although incantatrixes do not in any sense seem to be an organized sisterhood or 'secret society,' they often, having similar aims and interests, act together to combat common foes – notably those individuals who use magic in a dangerous, irresponsible manner. An incantatrix seeks to police the unrestrained use of magic about her abode, or challenge (not always openly) such uses that she observes elsewhere, much like a druid protecting his forest and other forests in the region. They seem particularly to dislike those who often create *gates* or otherwise compel or allow creatures to enter the Prime Material Plane from other planes, and thus often oppose specialist conjurers and elementalists.

Incantatrixes were originally conceived by Ed Greenwood as a First Edition AD&D® game subclass of magic–user in DRAGON Magazine #90, pp. 8-14. Rules for creating an incanta-

trix as a type of wizard specialist in accordance with the rules of 2nd Edition AD&D are detailed below. Several unique spells developed for the incantatrix subclass have changed substantially following the Time of Troubles, and now correspond to analogous 2nd Edition spells. Otherwise, incantatrixes still have access to almost every spell described in the original article except for a few priest spells. A few spells developed by incantatrixes are presented at the end of this article, slightly updated from their original form in the article in DRAGON Magazine #90.

Incantatrixes are few in number; rarely are there more than a handful well-known in any generation. Currently there are only seven widely known living incantatrixes and a two suspected incantatars (male incantatrixes) in the Realms, but there are probably up to a few hundred who labor in relative anonymity. References to incantatrixes in the Realms appear in the novel *Spellfire*, by Ed Greenwood, and the Tome of the Unicorn, a spell book detailed in the original FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed set.

Description: Spells of the school of incantation affect the casting of magic. (This school subsumes the category of metamagic, briefly discussed in the *Tome of Magic*, p. 10.) Such spells may enhance or reduce the effectiveness of other spells (i.e. metamagic), disrupt the magic of other spellcasters, banish summoned creatures from other planes, or shield the spellcaster from magical attack.

Specialist Name: Incantatrix (female), Incantatar (male). (For the rest of this article, the more common term 'incantatrix' is used to refer to both male and female specialists in the school of incantation. Incantatrixes are occasionally referred to as metamages, but this term is not strictly correct.)

Allowed Races: All known incantatrixes have been human or half–elven, and almost all known specialists in the school of incantation have been female. Only the former is a requirement.

Ability Requirements: A minimum Intelligence of 13 and Wisdom of 12 are required to become an incantatrix, because this school of magic demands insight, intuition, and willpower to police the unrestrained use of magic by other wizards and to confront creatures from other planes. (If the subabilities from the PLAYER'S OPTION: *Skills & Powers* hardcover are being used, a minimum Reason of 13, Intuition of 12, and Willpower of 12 are required.)

Saving Throw Modifiers: The saving throws of all opponents are penalized by –1 when saving against an incantation spell cast by an incantatrix. An incantatrix receives a +1 bonus to her saving throws against incantation magic or magical devices duplicating these effects.

Bonus Spells, Acquired Powers, and Special Hindrances: An incantatrix can memorize one extra spell at each spell level available, providing that at least one of the memorized spells is from the school of incantation; thus a 1st–level incantatrix can memorize two first level spells, as long as at least one is in the school of incantation.

An incantatrix receives a bonus of

Spells from the School of Incantation[1]

copy (1st, CWH)
Otto's chime of release (1st, GA)
shield (1st, PH)
forget (2nd, PH)
knock (2nd PH)
alacrity (3rd, ToM)
augmentation I (3rd, ToM)
Drawmij's marvelous shield (3rd, GA)
dispel magic (3rd, PH)
dweomer vortex (3rd, FRX1)
far reaching I (3rd, ToM)
minor malison (3rd, ToM)
squaring the circle (3rd, ToM)
dilation I (4th ToM)
extension I (4th, PH)
far reaching II (4th, ToM)
greater malison (4th, ToM)
Mordenkainen's celerity (4th, ToM)
Rary's mnemonic enhancer (4th, PH)
Rary's spell enhancer (4th, GA)
minor globe of invulnerability (4th, PH)
minor spell turning (4th, ToM)
Bigby's interposing hand (5th, PH)
dismissal (5th, PH)
extension II (5th, PH)
far reaching III (5th, ToM)
feeblemind (5th, PH)
Mordenkainen's involuntary wizardry (5th, DRAGON #200)
Rary's mind shield (5th, GA)
Rary's superior spell enhancer (5th, GA)
wall of force (5th, PH)
augmentation II (6th, ToM)
dilation II (6th, ToM)
dispel possession (6th, DRAGON #90)
extension III (6th, PH)
globe of invulnerability (6th, PH)
curse of forgetfulness (7th, RoU1)
banishment (7th, PH)
draincone (7th, FRX1)
forcecage (7th, PH)
maladweomer (7th, DRAGON #90)
power word, stun (7th, PH)
ruby ray of reversal (7th, FRA)
spell turning (7th, PH)
steal enchantment (8th, ToM)
stealspell (7th, DRAGON #90, FR0)
Simbul's synostodweomer (7th, FRA)
weirdshield (7th, FRX1)
maze (8th, PH)
mystic shield (8th, FRX1)
prismatic wall (8th PH)
disruption (9th, DRAGON #164)
mystic sphere (9th, FRX1)
power word, banishment (9th, FR16)
prismatic sphere (9th, PH)
unbinding (9th, DRAGON #90)

[1] Spells in *italics* are reversible. Spells in **boldface** are updated in 2nd Edition format at the end of this article. PH indicates spells found in the *Player's Handbook*. ToM indicates spells found in the *Tome of Magic*. CWH indicates spells found in *The Complete Wizard's Handbook*. FRA indicates spells found in the FORGOTTEN REALMS *Adventures* hardcover. GA indicates spells found in the GREYHAWK® *Adventures* hardcover. RoU1 indicates spells found in the *Ruins of Undermountain I* boxed set. FRB1 indicates spells found in the *Menzoberranzan* boxed set. FRX1 indicates spells found in the *Ruins of Myth Drannor* boxed set. FR0 indicates spells found in the original FORGOTTEN REALMS (gray) boxed set. FR13 indicates spells found in the *Anauroch* accessory. FR16 indicates spells found in *The Shining South* accessory. AA indicates spells found in the AL–QADIM® *Arabian Adventures* book. SOL indicates spells found in the AL–QADIM *Secrets of the Lamp* boxed set. Spells detailed within the pages of DRAGON Magazine and POLYHEDRON® Newszine are indicated by issue number.

+15% when learning spells from the school of incantation and a penalty –15% when learning spells from all other schools (except the schools of abjuration and lesser divination for which there is no bonus or penalty).

An incantatrix automatically gains one new spell from the school of incantation each time she gains a new spell level to add to her spell books. No roll for learning the spell need be made. Like other specialists, when researching new spells from the school of incantation, an incantatrix has an easier time of it (as per the rules in the DUNGEON MASTER® *Guide* and *The Complete Wizard's Handbook*).

An incantatrix gains the spellcraft proficiency as a bonus nonweapon proficiency. An incantatrix is not allowed to take any weapon style specialization proficiencies or weapon group proficiencies (as detailed in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook* and the PLAYER'S OPTION: *Skills & Powers* hardcover). An incantatrix never receives more than a total of two weapon proficiencies. An incantatrix is forbidden from taking "combat" nonweapon proficiencies such as blindfighting and tumbling.

At 3rd level, an incantatrix gains the ability to see ethereal creatures, including out–of–phase creatures and those employing temporary magics such as spells or magic items, when the incantatrix is on any plane that the ethereal plane permeates (such as the Prime Material), and so long as the ethereal creature occupies an equivalent Ethereal Plane position within 30' of the incantatrix's location.

At 4th level, an incantatrix gains the ability to physically or magically attack creatures who are out of phase, ethereal, blinking rapidly about, and so on. For magical attacks of this sort, the incantatrix may use any spell except *stealspell*, *ruby ray of reversal*, or *unbinding*.

At 6th level, an incantatrix gains immunity to the level–draining powers of creatures employing energies from the Negative Material Plane, such as xeg–yi and many undead.

At 8th level, an incantatrix gains a +6 bonus to her spellcraft nonweapon proficiency checks.

At 20th level an incantatrix gains a still–mysterious ability to drain magic from an item or device that has charges, and use the magical force to restore her own vitality. This power does not work on a permanent item that has no charges, nor on an artifact or relic. It cannot be used to augment or restore spells or magical items possessed by the incantatrix, but only as a form of cure light wounds magic; one drained charge gains 1–8 hit points for the incantatrix. To use this power, the incantatrix must remain still, holding the item to be drained with her bare hand or hands, for one round per charge drained. An incantatrix can use this ability before combat to augment temporarily her hit points above her normal maximum – but this does not raise her level or hit dice for purposes of spellcasting, saving throws, and the like. These extra, "phantom" hit points last for only 1 turn before their energy is forever lost, but any magical or physical damage suffered by the incantatrix during that turn diminishes and exhausts the "phantom" hit points before the incantatrix suffers any real hit point damage.

If the optional rules for training given in the DMG are used, the incantatrix may find it extremely difficult to find an appropriate tutor. Although a senior incantatrix of at least one level higher than the new level is preferred, an incantatrix may be trained by a generalist mage or abjuration specialist of at least three levels higher than the new level to be obtained by the incantatrix.

Oppositional Schools: An incantatrix cannot learn spells from the schools of conjuration/summoning, invocation/evocation, illusion/phantasm, or necromancy that are not cross–listed in either the school of incantation, alteration, and/or abjuration. They cannot cast any wild magic spells.

Spell Analysis: Although the school of incantation has a fairly limited spell selection of low level spells, such spells are very effective when used in battle

with other spellcasters. The school of incantation magic can be subdivided into four categories of spells as follows:
1) Metamagic Spells: This group includes spells that enhance or reduce the effectiveness of other spells such as *alacrity, augmentation I & II; dilation I & II; far reaching I, II, & III; extension I, II, & III; greater malison; maladweomer; minor malison; Mordenkainen's celerity; Rary's mnemonic enhancer; Rary's spell enhancer; Rary's superior spell enhancer;* and *squaring the circle.*

Incantatrixes have developed reversed versions of the *augmentation, dilation, far reaching,* and *extension spells* which can be used to minimize the effectiveness of opponent's magic (a successful saving throw versus magic negates the spell, range is 10' per level).
2) Disruptive Spells: This group includes spells that disrupt magical wards and a spellcasting opponent's ability to cast spells such as *dispel magic, dispel possession, disruption, draincone, dweomer vortex, feeblemind, forget, knock, maze, Mordenkainen's involuntary wizardry, Otto's chime of release, power word – stun, ruby ray of reversal, steal enchantment, stealspell,* and *unbinding.*
3) Banishment Spells: This group includes spells that banish summoned creatures back to their own plane of existence such as *banishment, dismissal,* and *power word – banishment.*
4) Shielding Spells: This group includes spells that shield an incantatrix from the magic of other spellcasters such as *Bigby's interposing hand, Drawmij's marvelous shield, forcecage, globe of invulnerability, minor globe of invulnerability, minor spell turning, mystic shield, mystic sphere, prismatic sphere, prismatic wall, Rary's mind shield, shield, spell turning, wall of force,* and *wierdshield.*

Only the spells *copy* and *Simbul's synostodweomer* fall outside of these classifications.

Because of the large number of opposition schools barred to an incantatrix and the relatively small scope of the school of incantation, particularly at low levels, low level incantatrixes rarely actively adventure, preferring to study, and may thus be more useful as NPCs. Incantatrixes who do adventure typically seek out only specific types of foes against whom their abilities are particularly suited. A few such spellcasters adventure with powerful groups of fighters and priests who can shield the incantatrix from physical combat; allowing the incantatrix to employ her skills against enemy spellcasters and creatures who exist simultaneously on more than one plane.

Most Desirable Spells
1) Low–Level: The number of first and second level spells in the school of incantation is extremely limited, although *shield* is a good defensive spell and *knock* can be quite helpful. The third level spells *dispel magic* and *dweomer vortex* are very useful for neutralizing enemy spellcasters. The reversed form of *far reaching I* can potentially cause an enemy spellcaster's offensive spells to affect his own troops.
2) Medium–Level: Feeblemind and reversed versions of *dilation, extension,* and *far reaching* spells are useful for negating the threat of enemy spellcasters. *Dismissal* and *dispel possession* can remove potentially deadly foes from the battlefield. *Minor spell turning* and *wall of force* are very useful protective spells.
3) High–Level: Maladweomer, stealspell, and *unbinding* are the signature spells of an incantatrix. *Banishment, disruption, draincone, power word – banishment,* and *ruby ray of reversal* are all powerful spells for negating opponents.

Updated Spells

Dispel Possession[2]
Sixth-Level Wizard Spell (Abjuration, Necromancy)
Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 2 rounds/level
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: One creature
Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell, a spellcaster can temporarily free a recipient creature from the effects of any spell in the school of enchantment/charm, psionic attack or domination, or ESP or similar control and "eavesdropping" magics. If *dispel possession* is cast upon the body of the victim of a prior *magic jar* spell, the life force controlling the victim's body will be driven out of the stolen body, back into its jar. If the jar is not within range of the body (see *magic jar* description in the *Player's Handbook*) when the *dispel possession* is cast, the life force is merely quelled for the duration of the spell, allowing the mind of the true owner of the body to reassert itself and temporarily regain control of its body.

By application of this spell, a *charm* spell is forever broken, but other mental attacks and controls may resume at the spell expiration. The material component of this spell is a sample of teardrops (one will suffice) from the eye of a human, elf, or half–elf.

Maladweomer[3]
Seventh-Level Wizard Spell (Alteration)
Reversible
Range: 10' plus 10' per level
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 round/level
Casting Time: 7
Area of Effect: One person
Saving Throw: Negates

By means of this spell, an incantatrix causes any and all spells and spell–like powers cast or wielded by a target creature, including those of items employed by the target, to be at the nadir of their effectiveness; i.e. any damage caused by offensive magics will be the minimum possible, saving throws vs. such magics are enhanced by a +4 bonus, and spells which are extant (such as magical charms) and ongoing at the time the *maladweomer* takes effect are altered in efficacy. (For instance, a charmed individual who had previously failed to save versus the spell would immediately be allowed another saving throw, with the +4 bonus.) The material component for this spell is a small, clear glass or crystal prism, which is smashed (with a weapon–blow, and/or against a wall, rock, or floor) in the spell–casting.

The reverse, *empradweomer* (or "dweomerboost"), does not require that the crystal be smashed; rather, it vanishes when the spellcasting is complete. The reverse does not require a saving throw, has the same duration as *maladweomer*, and permits all magic to be cast or wielded by the recipient creature during that time to be of maximum efficiency (maximum damage and effects). Both forms of the spell can be cast upon the incantatrix herself, so that maladweomer would enable an incantatrix to lessen her powers when compelled to work magic against her wishes.

Either version of this spell can be used in conjunction with any other spell in the school of incantation, including all forms of metamagic.

Stealspell[4]
Seventh-Level Wizard Spell (Enchantment/Charm)
Range: 10 feet/level
Components: V, S
Duration: Special
Casting Time: 7
Area of Effect: One creature
Saving Throw: Negates

This powerful magic is famous in legend, and it is the one power that above all others identifies the incantatrix as a unique type of specialist wizard. By means of this incantation, any single being that the incantatrix points at (who is within range) must save versus spells at –1 (creatures from planes other than the Prime Material save at par), or suffer the theft of any one memorized spell from his or her mind. (If there is no memorized spell to be stolen, the *stealspell* has no effect and is lost.) The stolen spell is determined randomly, and is not chosen by either the incantatrix or her victim. The magic of the *stealspell* works even against a victim who is unconscious or insane; psionic protections, anti–magic shell, and all similar shielding spells, and mind bar and the like, are all powerless against this spell.

The *stealspell* can take any type of spell (hence both priest and wizard spells of any school may be stolen). A stolen spell may be "cast" immediately by the incantatrix or held in her mind for later use (subject to the restrictions described below), without material components or even any need for the incantatrix to understand the spell. She will not automatically know the identity or the nature of the stolen spell (and would probably only find out this information, without expelling the magic, if it was revealed by the victim from whom the spell was stolen). By expelling the stolen spell from her mind, the incantatrix may be able (by this means only) to use a spell that she would not normally be capable of casting (such as a priest spell or spell from a barred school) – but because she doesn't know what the spell is, she may end up aiding rather than harming an opponent.

Any stolen spell takes effect, when expelled, as though it was cast by the being from which it was stolen, with regard to level of effectiveness, damage caused, alignment considerations, and so forth. Spell–like natural powers employed by beings, and psionics, cannot be stolen by means of this spell. The stolen spell is transferred from the victim's mind to the incantatrix at the end of the casting of the *stealspell*, and the transfer takes one segment. A spell which the victim has already begun to cast will never be stolen; if it is the last or only spell in the victim's mind, the spell will be ruined and lost (just as if the victim had been disturbed during the attempted casting), but no energy or information will be transferred to the incantatrix.

The incantatrix can retain the stolen spell, instead of expelling it from her mind, and subsequently record it by means of a *copy* spell which erases the stolen spell from the incantatrix's mind as it is recorded, without discharging its power. However, an incantatrix cannot herself use a priest spell or a wizard spell normally barred to her use that she has recorded in this manner; she will have produced only a scroll that is useless to her, except as an item to sell or barter. When a stolen spell is recorded in this fashion, the identity and nature of the spell can become known to the incantatrix (by means of a *read magic*), so she is able to determine whether the scroll is of use to her.
This spell has the potential for abuse if used by a PC incantatrix as a method of creating scroll spells cheaply. If an incantatrix attempts to steal more than one spell per thirty day period, the incantatrix is required to make a successful system shock roll every time a spell is successfully stolen (after the first attempt that month). Failure may cause death (20%) or cause the incantatrix to lapse into a coma for thirty days (80%).

Unbinding[5]
Ninth-Level Wizard Spell (Abjuration)
Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 9 rounds
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: 20 foot radius sphere around caster
Saving Throw: None

When an unbinding spell is cast, a sphere of magical force comes into being about the caster and moves with her for the duration of the spell. It affects many magics that are within, or come to be within, its area of effect, as follows: *Hold* spells of all types, *guards and wards*, *temporal stasis*, *imprisonment*, *time stop*, and *wizard lock* spells, as well as *forcecages*, *cubes and walls of force*, are all ended or negated immediately; i.e. an imprisoned creature emerges as though a *freedom* spell had been cast, and so forth.

Summoning circles, thaumaturgic circles, and similar magical circles or confining runic constructions are shattered or obliterated, freeing any previously trapped occupants (who will know who has freed them, but are not in any way under the control of the incantatrix).

A *magic mouth* will speak, regardless of its specific trigger, and vanish forever. The effects of a *statue* spell are ended, and a *magic jar* is shattered – forever destroyed, and the life force within (if any) snuffed out.

Any magics that contain, constrain, conceal (i.e. *invisibility*) creatures or items are destroyed by contact with the area of effect of this spell (with the exceptions noted below); the spell also causes physical locks to open, props and wedges or spikes to come loose, chains to part, bars to lift, seals to break, etc.

Note that all of these effects occur regardless of the caster's wishes, and are not discerning: all seals break, not just a few specific targets – even including the stoppers on potion bottles, ties on wineskins, fastenings on clothing, and the like. Those on the person of the incantatrix, or being carried or worn by her, will remain undisturbed, but any others (even those of allies) will be affected. Note also that the opening of locks or other closures does not prevent any alarms or booby traps attached to them from functioning normally.

Spells such as *anti–magic shell*, *Leomund's tiny hut*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *globe of invulnerability*, *prismatic sphere*, *shield*, and similar protective magics are not affected by an unbinding, nor does it reveal or change back (to flesh) petrified creatures.

Untriggered *symbols* or *glyphs of warding* are unaffected by an unbinding, and it does not set free elementals, invisible stalkers, etc. bound to service by others.

The material components of this spell are a lodestone (not necessarily magical) and a pinch of saltpeter, both of which are consumed in the casting.

[2] Original description found in DRAGON Magazine #90, p. 12.
[3] Original description found in DRAGON Magazine #90, p. 12.
[4] Original description found in DRAGON Magazine #90, pp. 12–13, and the original FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed set in the Dungeon Master's Sourcebook of the Realms, pp. 93-94.
[5] Original description found in DRAGON Magazine #90, p. 14.

Larger than Life

Verity Shanae

by Steve Miller

Rutgar drew in a deep breath of air. The smell of burning crops and the sounds of peasants wailing in anguishwere heavy on the breeze that wafted to where Rutgar stood watching the carnage. The two fire elementals that destroyed the village should be more than enough to convince Lord Sahen to reconsider his decision to refuse to pay a tribute to Rutgar.

He smiled to himself, confident that his difficulties with Lord Sahen had come to an end. Then he heard movement behind him. He spun, one hand darting into his pouch for the scrap of fur that waited there, the other seizing the glass rod that hung on his belt.

"There's no need for that," said the woman who stood some 10 feet away. Tall and slender, she had a youthful face, yet her dark hair was streaked with gray. She was dressed in a very unwomanly fashion—dark shirt and trousers and light brown soft boots. Pouches and an odd assortment of knickknacks hung from her belt, and she wore a sleeveless cloak with many pockets. Rutgar knew he was facing a wizard. She continued: "I just came to ask that you cease this incessant summoning of creatures and terrorizing of the peasants. I'm in the middle of some important research, and your activities keep interrupting me."

Rutgar gave a slight bow. "My dear lady, I do apologize for inconveniencing such a lovely creature, but I am a man with a mission, and your pursuits are of no concern to me. Return to your kitchen and your recipes, and know that Rutgar of the Pale allowed you to live."

Irritation flashed across her face, and one of her hands quickly slid into a pouch. Rutgar's heart leapt—it had been years since he'd fought a duel, because most mages feared him as they feared death. But this woman had obviously not yet learned of his reputation. Well, that, too, could be corrected this day. Hopefully, she'd die well.

He unleashed the lightning bolt *spell he's prepared as she spoke, watching it leap from the crystal rod, expecting it to streak toward her and char her slender body to ash. Instead, it arced toward her for barely a yard, and then shot back at Rutgar with a crash of lightning. He cried out, ducking, yet failed to react quickly enough. The electricity sizzled through his body. He heard the crash of the* lightning bolt *rebounding off something behind where he had stood...more agonizing pain. Then he felt a hammer slamming against his mind, and his world of pain faded to darkness...*

The following dawn, an army patrol that was helping to put out the fires spread by the rampaging elements found Rutgar. He had been tied to a tree with a rope around one ankle. He was rocking back and forth, slackjawed and drooling, blisters and burns covering his body. A note pinned to his charred, royal blue robe read:

"My Lord Sahen,

"I deliver this bit of trash for your disposal. On behalf of the people of this county, I kindly request that you provide the garrison with a wizard of sufficient skill to deal with this kind of situation. I do not like having my peace disturbed, and it would be better for all involved if I were not forced to take matters into my own hands again.With respect,

"Verity Shanae"

Verity Shanae is an oddity: She is a powerful wizard who intensely dislikes magic. She is an incantatrix, a wizard whom other magic users fear and shun. But Verity only gathers magical strength and power so she can stop wielding it some day.

Verity was born into a life of privilege, the daughter of a court wizard to a minor noble. She spent her formative years mostly in the company of servants and nannies, as her father was always absorbed by personal spell research or by duties to his liege. She grew to hate the trappings of what her father apparently loved above her.

When she was 15, her father arranged for her to embark on the study

of the Arcane Arts. Her response was to run away from home.

Intelligence and inventiveness kept Verity safe from the dangers that might befall a young girl alone in a city. She even fell in with a couple of adventuring groups where, much to her chagrin, the minor magics she had learned by virtue of growing up around a wizard saved her and her companions on more than one occasion.

Verity had been on her own for almost three years when her adventuring group got wind of a plot to overthrow the king—and a cornerstone of that plot was to assassinate his court wizard, Verity's father. They did their best to foil the scheme, but their actions came too late to save Verity's father. He died in her arms, his final words revolving around happiness over her return and sorrow that he would never be able to pass along his Art to her.

The main perpetrator behind the attempted coup was himself a wizard. Verity's adventuring group devoted the next several years to pursuing this individual, but he was always one step ahead of them. Verity, in the meantime, decided that she must develop further her magical skills, but without formal training, she progressed slowly. Magic use remained a last resort for her, but since their main quarry was a wizard, and they kept squaring off against his blackhearted apprentices, she felt it was necessary for her friends' survival.

By the time she was 22, Verity had grown tired of the hunt. The adventuring group was breaking up, and their foe continued to stay one step ahead of them. The only light in her life was the relationship that had developed between herself and Jovan, one of the party's warriors. The two of them married, and used the loot they had retained over the years to buy the farm Jovan had always dreamed of owning. Within a year, Verity gave birth to a son, and it seemed she would live happily ever after as a mother and wife.

But just as the group was getting tired of hunting, so did the wizard who would be king tire of being hunted. He decided to deal personally with the upstarts who had harassed him, and he eventually tracked down Jovan and Verity to their farm. When he was finished with his attack, Verity's son was dead, and her husband was lost to an *imprisonment* spell. Verity herself was immolated by the fell magics of her foe and was so badly charred that the vengeful wizard believed her dead. However, she survived the destruction of her farm, and in the days that followed, Verity managed to get to a nearby convent, where the sisters healed her of her injuries. Verity returned to the castle of her birth, and claimed her father's belongings which had been stored there by leave of the king. She purchased an isolated abandoned farmhouse where she set up her laboratory and library and proceeded to study everything she could of magic.

Over the years, Verity has sought out other mages, either to learn from or to do battle with. If she learned of a wise and peaceful spellcaster, she learned whatever he or she was willing to teach, adding their knowledge to her repertoire. If, however, she received news of a wizard who was oppressing people or destroying the countryside through the power of his magic, she sought him out to put an end to his abuses of the Art. In either case, Verity usually came away from the interaction with a little more knowledge and power.

Generally, when she defeated a foe in spell combat, she sought out his sanctum and laid claim to his arcane belongings. This furthered her magical studies as much as did her formal education, for it gave her an understanding of the tactics of her enemies. It was by accident that she became an incantatrix, for she discovered a tome in the house of one of her enemies that revealed the magics of the school of incantation. She is not fully aware that this is a magical specialty, however, and will be amused if someone refers to her as an "incantatrix."

Most of Verity's spells are variations on spells that other wizards have already developed, but she has an intuitive grasp of the magical arts. (The spells in her spellbook work just like the normal game spells, but are differently constructed.) She could probably be even more powerful than she is currently, if she had been formally trained as her father wished. Most of her spells are designed around combatting or crippling other wizards, although she has also been experimenting with summoning and dismissing extraplanar beings. One of her preferred tactics, when she can catch unawares a violent wizard, is to cast a *wall of force* around him and provoke him into casting a damaging spell like *fireball* or *lightning bolt*, bringing him down with his own violence.

Verity Shanae
Human female
14th level Incantatrix

STR: 8
DEX: 17
CON: 12
INT: 16
WIS: 15
CHA: 12

AC Normal: 7
AC Rear: 9
Alignment: Neutral Good
Languages: Common, Ancient Common, Elven
Age: 32
Height: 5' 10"
Hair/Eyes: Dark brown with gray streaks/brown
Weapon Proficiencies: Knife, dart
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Agriculture (16), ancient history (15), cooking (16), etiquette (12), herbalism (14), reading/writing (17), religion (15), seamstress/tailor (16), spellcraft (14)
Magic Items: *wand of wonder, ring of protection +1*
Spellbook: These are Verity's preferred spells; she has access to others if necessary

1st level: *shield, Otto's chime of release, protection from evil, gaze reflection, charm person*

2nd level: *forget, knock, detect invisibility, ray of enfeeblement, strength*

3rd level: *augmentation I, dispel magic, minor malison, hold person, slow, tongues*

4th level: *dilation I, extension I, far reaching, greater malison, minor globe of invulnerability, minor spell turning*

5th level: *dismissal, extension II, far reaching III, feeblemind, Rary's mind shield, wall of force*

6th: *augmentation II, dilation II, dispel possession*

7th: *banishment, draincone, forcecage, maladweomer, powerword– stun, spell turning, stealspell*

At present, Verity's is trying to create a spell that negates *imprisonment*. It has been 10 years since Jovan was taken from her, and she's missed him every day since. She believes herself to be close to the answer and close to having her husband back.

❑

The Citadel of Protection

Ravens Bluff's temple of Helm

by Robert Nichols

Sitting on the edge of town, on top of a hill, is the large stone building that is The Citadel of Protection, a temple dedicated to Helm, God of Guardians and Protection. The building is square, almost a cube, of three stories. Nearly all priests and paladins dedicated to this stern god stay here rather than in the inns and taverns of Ravens Bluff.

The Citadel of Protection has no windows on the first and second floors, and only arrow slits and machicolations on the third floor. The temple is lit by hooded continual light sconces.

A Quick Tour of the Citadel

When visitors enter the large iron doors of the primary entrance to the temple, they find themselves in a long and relatively narrow room (1). Arranged alongside the walls on either side of the entrance are suits of plate mail and plate armor. The oldest of these suits are nearest the entrance and the newer are along the wall deeper into the room. At the end of the hall is another set of double iron doors much like the primary entrance. Etched into the iron is the holy symbol of Helm, a gauntlet with an open eye.

Beyond this set of double doors is the cathedral (2). The ceiling of this room is 30 feet high, and its floor measures 50 feet long and 40 feet wide. This large room is decorated with martial regalia and images. there are coats of arms mounted on the wall and suits of plate armor standing in a guard position on each side of the room. There are no pews, since the ceremonies of Helm are all conducted with the worshippers at attention, ready and prepared.

Mounted on the far wall is a large iron representation of a gauntlet. There is an open eye in the middle of the gauntlet. Below this gauntlet is a large stone altar. The top of the altar is a large shield on which is emblazoned the holy symbol of Helm.

Opposite the main altar area, on the second floor, is a choir box (3). Beyond the choir box is a beautiful organ (4). This organ is very large and produces an astonishing range of music. It is rumored that the organ is powered by an imprisoned efreeti, but the priests of Helm refuse to comment on this. (About 30 years ago, before High Vigilant Master Alaric first came to the temple, he fought and defeated a Red Wizard of Thay. In the spoils of battle, Alaric found an iron flask that contained an efreeti lord. When Alaric joined the priests at the Citadel of Protection, he donated the iron flask to the priesthood. Supposedly, the Vigilant Master at that time was able to use the iron flask in such away that the efreeti would be set free after a 100 years of service.) The organ is played from the choirmaster's box (5).

The first floor of the Citadel of Protection has the working offices (6) of the priests that tend to the administrative tasks that keep the temple running. Additionally, there are a number of lecture rooms (7) that the priests use for training acolytes and initiates of their order.

On the other side of the temple lies the refectory, the kitchen (8), and a number of storage rooms (S). Also on this side are several weapons training rooms (9) where the priests and paladins of Helm practice their martial skills.

The second floor of the Citadel of Protection is devoted to living quarters (10) for the priests, paladins, and fighters that make their home here. One corner of this floor holds a small forge (11) that the priests use for repairing armor and weapons and fixing some of the more common household implements. The entrance to the choir box (3) and the control room of the organ (5) are also on this level.

The third floor of the Citadel of Protection is where the high priests and paladins have their private chambers and offices (12). A large section of the third floor is set aside for storage (S) and a gymnasium (13) where all priests are expected to spend at least one hour each day maintaining their physical condition.

The stairs continue up to exit onto the roof. Up on the roof the priests and paladins spend guard duty. The priests maintain their vigilance continuously, despite the relative peace of Ravens Bluff. Guard shift on the roof of the Citadel is part of the duty of nearly every follower of Helm in the Citadel.

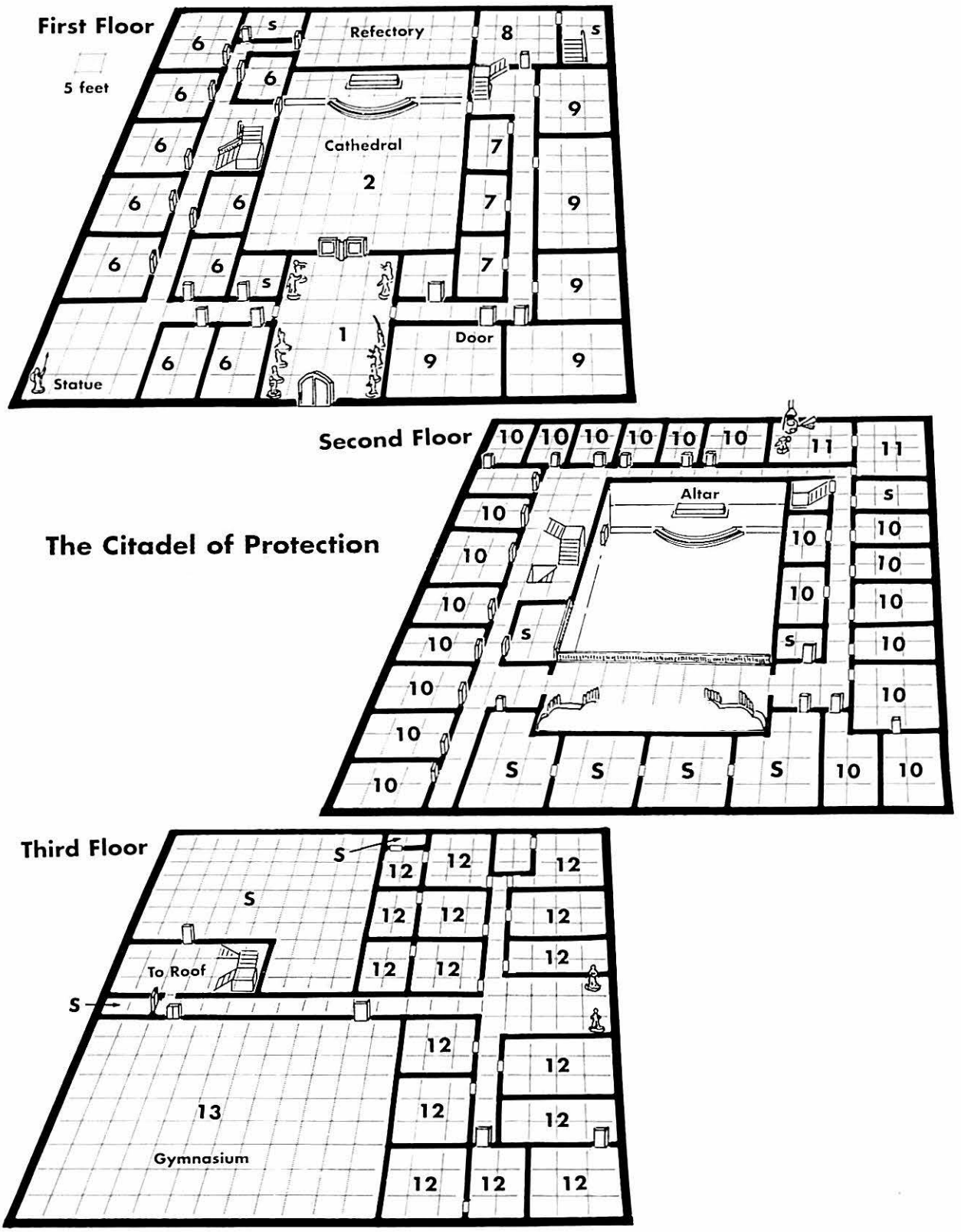
The Religion of Helm in Ravens Bluff

As is the case with temples of Helm throughout the Realms, the priests, warriors, and other followers of Helm in the Citadel of Protection are expected to maintain their vigilance, physiclal condition, and skill at arms at their peak at all times. Further, they are expected to obey the orders of their superiors without question. Because their calling is so demanding, followers of Helm feel a sense of superiority to the people they are sworn to defend.

Helm was the only God that was not thrown from the heavens during the Time of Troubles. In fact, Helm was charged by Ao, the Overgod, with preventing the return of the gods to their places of power. The resulting chaos from the Time of Troubles has left the priesthood with an undeserved bad reputation.

Despite the disdain in which others often hold them, the priests of the Citadel regularly assist the Constables, Army, and Harbor Patrols of Ravens Bluff in their duties. This consists of accompanying patrols, providing healing and other spells, and other duties as required. This attitude of willing service has earned The Citadel of Protection a measure of respect in Ravens Bluff.

The priests of the Citadel also hire groups of adventurers from time to



The Citadel of Protection

time. The military of Ravens Bluff is not sufficiently large to patrol far from the borders of the city, so the Citadel assists in these efforts by hiring adventuring groups and sending them on long–range patrols into the hills and mountains surrounding Ravens Bluff. The priests of the Citadel supply these adventurers with *potions of healing* and promises of aid if they do a good job. The pay for these missions is not much, but it is always regular.

Currently, the priests of the Citadel of Protection are involved in a competition of sorts with the temple of Gond. Most of the worshippers that used to venerate Helm transferred their loyalty to Gond after the Time of Troubles. This has left bad feelings between the two temples.

Duties and Rites

Priests of Helm prefer to wear armor as their ceremonial vestments. Most of the higher-level priests at the Citadel of Protection have had their armor filigreed in gold and have a large golden eye set in the middle of their breastplate. Colors favored by the priesthood are steel, gold, and white.

In terms of civic duty, the priests of Helm are available to aid the citizens of Ravens Bluff in any lawful activity as long as the citizen will meet the price the temple sets. Additionally, the priests of Helm teach reading and writing, basic defense, and singing to those who wish to attend classes at the Citadel of Protection.

To a priest of Helm, the most important part of the day is the daily worship services. These services take place at dusk each day. The service consists of several hymns, a exhortation to believe in self-reliance, several prayers, another hymn, and then a sermon by one of the priests. The services conclude with more hymns. After the ceremony is over, worshippers can approach the altar and make sacrifices to Helm of the Unsleeping Eye. Sermons are usually about the virtues of vigilance and defense.

The priests of Helm are expected to take part in the martial hymns that are part of the services, whether they can sing or not. The best singers are required to join the choir. The choir leads the temple in the services and a priest officiates. This is different from most temples, as nearly all the Realms gods' ceremonies are lead by the priests with the choir (if they have one) adding support.

Holy Days

Important holy days for the temple of Helm are Kythorn 15th, a day that is looked upon with much disdain by the other priesthoods of the Civic temples. Kythorn 15th was the day that the Time of Troubles started. The worshippers of Helm call this day Guardian Day. They find special significance for this day because Helm was the only god not stripped of his powers and trusted by Ao. The priests of Helm spend the entire day in meditation. At an hour before dusk, they begin services and welcome any worshippers who join them. After services, the priesthood holds a small party for those especially beloved by Helm and his priests. This is a small private affair, full of ceremony and oath-taking and oath-giving.

Higharvestide is also an important day for the priesthood. A priest of Helm sees this day as the beginning of the winter season, a time of great danger. On Higharvestide, while the rest of the city is celebrating, the priesthood gathers and circles the city, blessing the walls and fortifications.

Another important day is Greengrass. On this day, the paladins and priests of Helm gather in the sanctuary for a rather long service. During the service, the priests sing "A Shield in Service." As they sing this lengthy hymn, each priest goes up to the altar and has their holy symbol re-sanctified.

The Priests

High Vigilant Master Alaric
Human male, Lawful Neutral
18th level Specialty Priest of Helm

Strength:	15
Dexterity:	13
Constitution:	16
Intelligence:	15
Wisdom:	18
Charisma:	17

Alaric is the current high priest of the temple. He is in his early sixties but is still a fit and vigorous man. He and Darrel spar every morning. It is a mark of great favor if a priest is asked to spar with Alaric during these sessions.

Alaric is a medium-sized man but has an imposing and commanding presence. He is bald except for a short fringe around his head. His eyes are brown and his skin is a rough, nut-brown. Alaric is married to the Vigilant Master Valeria. They have been married almost 20 years now but have no children.

Vigilant Master Valeria
Human female, Lawful Good
13th level Priest of Helm

Strength:	14
Dexterity:	13
Constitution:	14
Intelligence:	13
Wisdom:	16
Charisma:	15

Valeria is the second in command of the Citadel of Protection. Valeria was once an adventurer who lead many notable quests, the most famous of which was against the pirate Bloodsail. Valeria and her adventuring band, the Fist of Helm, assaulted the pirate's stronghold on the island Ilthan, in the Pirate Isles of the Sea of Fallen Stars. They success-

fully killed Bloodsail, sacked his fortress, and burned it behind them. Those days are behind her now and she has settled down to train new blood in the priesthood.

Valeria is married to Alaric, the high priest of the Citadel. She loves her husband very much but is disappointed she could never give him a son. She is in her early fifties. Her brown hair is just now starting to show signs of gray. Her eyes are blue and her skin is wrinkled and has a ruddy hue.

Vigilant Master Darrel Ironhands
Human male, Lawful Neutral
13th level Priest of Helm

Strength:	17
Dexterity:	15
Constitution:	15
Intelligence:	12
Wisdom:	15
Charisma:	16

Darrel Ironhands is the next in line to succeed Alaric as the high priest of the temple. He is a good choice, as he is dutiful in his responsibilities and well-liked by all in the temple. Darrel's duties include supplying the temple, making sure the priests maintain their vigilance, and making up the schedules for the watch and worship ceremonies.

Darrel is in his late thirties. He was once an adventurer in the lands of Thay and Aglarond. However, he soon found the adventuring life to be less rewarding than helping people as a priest of the Citadel of Protection. Darrel has short blond hair, green eyes, and a disarming smile. Many of the younger female priests and paladins harbor crushes for the handsome Darrel.

High Guardian Myra
Human female, Lawful Neutral
11th level Priest of Helm (formerly an 8th level Fighter)

Strength:	17
Dexterity:	11
Constitution:	15
Intelligence:	10
Wisdom:	18
Charisma:	15

Myra is in charge of the training of the lesser priests and paladins of Helm. She performs this duty with a zeal that does not endear her to the younger priests.

Myra is in her thirties and has short black hair, black eyes, and a dark brown (almost black) complexion. She is from Chult, a land she would rather forget than remember (she was taken from her homeland and sold as a slave in the arenas in Calimshan).

High Guardian Kanbri
Human male, Lawful Good
8th level Priest of Helm

Strength:	14
Dexterity:	16
Constitition:	11
Intelligence:	15
Wisdom:	16
Charisma:	14

Kanbri is the liaison between the Citadel of Protection and the city of Ravens Bluff. Whenever he is not at the temple, he can be found with the Constables. He enjoys the danger and adventure that the Constables find every night in their duties.

Kanbri is young, in his late twenties. He has brown hair that he keeps long and bound back in a pony tail. His eyes are blue and sparkle with good humor. He has been courting his fellow priest Lethe fairly regularly and the two are known to be an item.

Guardian Lethe
Human female, Lawful Neutral
8th level Specialty Priest

Strength:	15
Dexterity:	13
Constitution:	13
Intelligence:	14
Wisdom:	17
Charisma:	17

Lethe is the head of the lesser priests of Helm. She is an indifferent organizer, but a stickler for discipline. She makes sure that all priests practice with their weapons at least once per day.

Lethe is in her early thirties and has black hair and brown eyes. She was once trained for paladinhood, but found the restrictive lifestyle Helm's paladins must endure to be too strict.

Guardian Malik
Human male, Lawful Neutral
6th level Priest of Helm

Strength:	17
Dexterity:	9
Constitution:	17
Intelligence:	11
Wisdom:	14
Charisma:	10

Malik works with Lethe in keeping the younger priests of Helm in line. He is also a firm disciplinarian but he can also organize his resources better than Lethe. Lethe and he make a good team, but he does not like Lethe. Malik believes that Lethe plays favorites and hinders those she does not like. Malik watches Lethe and keeps a journal outlining what he perceives to be transgressions Lethe makes.

Malik is young, in his early twenties. He has risen to such an exalted post at such a young age by fighting in the Crusade that king Azoun raised to fight the horde. Because of these experiences, Malik is xenophobic to those people he perceives as foreign. He has been lectured on this several times by Valeria, but the lessons do not seem to stick.

Malik has brown hair, brown eyes, and a pock-marked complexion. He is not attractive, looking a bit like a muscular weasel. However, his presence is commanding and the priests under his command have learned that he is strict but fair.

Vhonna Deepdell, Commander of the Gauntlets
Human female, Lawful Good
12th level Paladin of Helm

Strength:	16
Dexterity:	14
Constitution:	15
Intelligence:	13
Wisdom:	16
Charisma:	18

Vhonna is the leader of the Gauntlets, a local chapter dedicated to Helm. She is a battle leader, having fought and commanded in the Crusade against the Tuigan. Unlike their effect on Malik, the Crusades left Vhonna with a thirst for new experiences and adventure. Unfortunately, the Citadel of Protection needs her to train and lead the Gauntlets. She prays to Helm every night, asking him to send a replacement for her so she can go adventuring. So far, Helm has not answered her prayers.

Vhonna is a tall and attractive woman. Her hair is long and blonde. She usually keeps her hair bound up in a bun and under her helmet. Her eyes are brown and her skin has a rosy hue. She has vows of chastity and celibacy, which has disappointed greatly her many suitors. ❑

Feather and Claw

Ravens Bluff's Knights of the Griffon

by Brian Burr and James Alan

The Knights of the Griffon are an elite fighting force attached to Ravens Bluff's military in times of war. They are an order dedicated to perfecting their martial skills, be it skill at arms or cunning strategy. As natural leaders they are often assigned to command troops from the city's army. They can also form units of their own, creating a formidable force on and above the battlefield.

These knights enjoy personal combat and have been known to challenge enemy leaders to duels. In the heat of battle, Griffon Knights have been known to boast that they will do a thing, such as forcing a rampaging dragon to submit to their will, and once the boast is given they will do everything they can to make it so. They pride themselves on their personal bravery and the greatest insult is to call them a coward.

Those knights who learn to ride the griffon into battle (airborne riding proficiency - griffon), and who have received the honors of the Griffon Helm and the Griffon Feather Necklace, are eligible to join the ranks of the Griffon Guard, an elite aerial cavalry unit that uses its powerful mounts in battle to defend the city and her peoples.

Their honor and the honor of the other knights of their order is paramount to the Griffon Knights. Their word is not lightly given, for once pledged, a Griffon Knight is honor–bound to complete the terms of that pledge. Furthermore, they have sworn to deal fairly with all those they meet.

To become a Griffon Knight a character must either become a squire of the Order or enter from another Order as a knight. The order chooses only the most worthy of knights from other orders, so this second method is far less frequent than the first. The city also holds infrequent tournaments during which those that have shown personal bravery and a great aptitude for combat may be offered a knighthood within the order. The character therefore must be at least a 5th level warrior, a 6th level priest, or a 7th level wizard or rogue (primarily bards).

Responsibilities

The Knights of the Griffon are Ravens Bluff's elite shock troops and as such will be the front line defense of the city against her enemies. During a war the Griffon Knights may be called upon to command the cavalry forces of Ravens Bluff, or to form the nucleus of a heavy cavalry unit comprised of the knights of other such military orders. Some few qualified knights are chosen to ride the fierce griffons of the city's air cavalry.

The Oath

Griffon Knights take their oath very seriously. They are among the most fervent in their adherence to the tenets of their order.

- A Griffon Knight must protect and defend the citizens of Ravens Bluff at all times, regardless of an individual citizen's social status.
- A Griffon knight must not, whether through action or inaction, allow harm to come to an innocent.
- A Griffon Knight must not allow any personal mission or obligation to keep them from fulfilling their duty to the city and its people.
- A Griffon Knight must always be a symbol of chivalry. They must respect and honor brother and sister knights of all orders.
- A Griffon Knight must obey and respect the rules of war and show mercy to a defeated honorable foe.
- A Griffon Knight must accept any valid challenge to their honor. Most duels will only be carried out until 2nd blood is drawn.
- A Griffon Knight must uphold the vows of the order at all times
- A Griffon Knight must contribute toward the maintenance and upkeep of Griffon Hall.

Benefits

- A secure room with a bed and storage facilities at Griffon Hall.
- A 20% reduction in the cost of non-magical weapons and armor from the order's weapon master.
- If the knight is killed while undertaking a mission for the order (Knight's adventure), and his body is recovered, the order will make arrangements to have a *raise dead* spell cast on them for 10,000 gold pieces.
- Due to their intense training with the city's cavalry units, the knight receives an additional weapon proficiency which must be spent on the lance.
- The knight may recommend a squire for admission into the knightly orders.
- The knight qualifies for another knighthood with 3 fewer chivalry points than those who become squires for the other order.
- The knight receives three Fame points upon being accepted into the order, two Fame points for every knightly honor awarded, and one Fame point for every Chivalry Point awarded. These may be divided among any appropriate categories.
- A Griffon Knight may also serve as a regular City Watch member but not as a member of the special branches of the Watch.

Special Honors

- Griffon Helm -- Awarded to knights who take the aerial riding non-weapon proficiency for griffons.
- Claw Gauntlets -- Special fighting gloves that do 1d4 damage (plus strength bonus) in hand to hand fighting. These marks of personal honor are given to a knight who avenges his honor by completing a quest after having to go before the Knights' Council for cowardice. In a world of magic spells, there is no lingering shame in failing a saving throw versus fear spells and the like, just pride in having cleansed your honor.
- Griffon Feather Necklace -- For great courage that inspires others to achieve victory over a powerful enemy.
- Sky Blue Cloak -- For avenging the honor of the order against a plot to discredit the knighthood.

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Forgotten Deities

Bright Nydra (an aspect of Selûne)

by Eric Boyd

In keeping with the format presented in the upcoming *Faiths & Avatars* supplement, this installment and future installments of this series of articles will be presented in this more complete format. Full details on Selûne and many other powers of the Realms may be found in *Faiths & Avatars*.

Bright Nydra (aspect of Selûne)

(Lady of the Winter Moon, The Fallen Daughter)
Demipower of the Prime Material Plane, CG

Portfolio:	Winter moon, hope, renewal
Aliases:	None
Domain Name:	Toril/Faerûn
Superior:	None
Allies:	Chauntea, Eldath, Lathander, Mielikki
Foes:	Auril
Symbol:	Crescent moon over an intricate snowflake
Wor. Align.:	NG, CG, N, CN

Winters are a time of terrible suffering for the humans (known as Marsh Drovers) and animals of the Farsea Marshes. Bright Nydra (BRIGHT NIGH-dra) appears in the form of the winter moon to bring them hope and strength as they await the arrival of spring.

Legends claim that Bright Nydra is the daughter of Selûne and Shaundakul who fell to Faerûn from the trailing lights of the moon (known as the Tears of Selûne) in the form of a falling star on a midwinter night a millenium ago. Although this may well have been true long ago, today she is but an aspect of Selûne, Lady of Silver and goddess of the moon.

According to the same Drover legend, Nydra appeared (in the form of a human female) to a band of refugees fleeing the destruction of their civilization by a horde of orcs and goblins. She led the surviving humans from their ruined cities located on the High Moor (not the vast moor southeast of Waterdeep but the much smaller moor of the same name located north of the Stormhorns) to the relative safety of the Farsea Marshes.

Drover tales relate her relentless battles with an evil being known as Bale (Bhaal), whom she supposedly defeated and drove out of the Marshes during the Time of Troubles. (It is possible that this event occurred between the time that the avatar of Bhaal was imprisoned in amber at High Horn and when he caught up with Midnight at the River Reaching.)

Like Selûne, Bright Nydra is a caring and quietly mystical power who seems permanently touched with sadness. Her worshippers claim that her inner emotions vary with the phases of the moon, but she appears relentlessly cheerful and always puts on a hopeful face.

Bright Nydra's Avatar

Bright Nydra appears as a human female with pale white skin tinted with blue highlights and silver hair wrapped around her like a toga. She has an unearthly, fey beauty and her eyes always seem focused on places long forgotten. She favors spells from the spheres of sun, elemental, plant, and weather and the schools of enchantment/charm and divination, although she can cast spells from any sphere or school. Her avatar has all the powers and abilities of Selûne, as detailed in *Faiths & Avatars*.

Other Manifestations
Bright Nydra appears on occasion as a shaft of unusually bright moonlight that dances with silver faerie fire. The shaft of moonlight appears most often to those who are depressed, lost, or confused and serves to bring them hope and lead them home. She is served by firestars, also known as moondancers, and manifests her favor by the discovery of white ice (diamonds) shaped into miniature tears.

The Church

Clergy: Clerics, specialty priests
Clergy's Align.: NG, CG
Turn Undead: C: Yes, SP: Yes
Cmnd. Undead: C: No, SP: No

All clerics and specialty priests of Bright Nydra receive religion (Faerûnian) as a bonus nonweapon proficiency. Clerics cannot rise beyond 2nd level in ability. Although Bright Nydra is reputed to have druidic followers, in truth her specialty priests fill that role. Bright Nydra is worshipped only by the Marsh Drovers of the Farsea Marshes. She is venerated as the head of a pantheon that includes Eldath, Lathander, Mielikki, Chauntea, and others, and she is loved for her wisdom and her kindness.

Bright Nydra has but a few shrines amongst the Marsh Drovers consecrated in her name. Such shrines tend to be open glades on relatively dry hillocks. Most are ringed with a circle of menhirs, each engraved with a representation of the moon in a different phase. Priestesses of Bright Nydra, who make up the vast majority of the clergy, are known as Moon Maidens. Males are known as Moon Guards. Specialty priests are known as moon drovers. Junior clergy members are addressed as Cousin. Senior clergy members are referred to as Moon Mother or Moon Father, as appropriate. The clergy of Bright Nydra are approximately equally divided between clerics, who serve primarily in the villages, and specialty priests who serve a role similar to druids and are rarely affiliated with any particular community.

Dogma: Bright Nydra teaches that life is an endless cycle of happiness and misery, good fortune and bad luck, rest and work. As surely as the years march on and the moon waxes and wanes, life will continue. As a consequence of this philosophy, it is the responsibility of mortals to contribute to the well-being of the community and to plan for difficult times. Likewise, life is to be enjoyed whenever possible and lived from day-to-day for good times are fleeting and are not to be forgotten.

Day-to-Day Activities: Bright Nydra's role as divine leader of the Drovers accounts for the predominance of women, including many of her priestesses, on the village councils of the marsh folk. The moon drovers spend their days providing council and wisdom to the Marsh Drovers and working alongside them in their daily tasks.

Holy Days/Important Ceremonies: Bright Nydra's holiest day is Midwinter, the day she reputedly first appeared to the Drover's ancestors. The Drovers mark this day with grand feasts made from fruits, vegetables, and nuts gathered during the summer months and preserved for winter's long and chill embrace. After the day-long meal, the evening is passed as the Elder Drovers tell the story of Nydra's appearance and her rescue of their people's ancestors.

Major Centers of Worship: Every Drover tale of Bright Nydra includes a mention of the Lost Shrine of the Winter Moon. This legendary holy site is reputed to be the location of Nydra's departure from Faerûn and is especially blessed by the goddess. (If it is rediscovered, the Lost Shrine has all the powers of a Harper refuge, as detailed in *Code of the Harpers*, but its powers function for any follower of Bright Nydra as well as any Harper.) The original form of her avatar, a life-sized statue carved from a single diamond in the shape of a human female, supposedly still lies buried in the marshes at the site of the Lost Shrine. Several adventuring bands have searched for this relic over the centuries, but none have been successful and none have returned. Some sages, Elminster among them, speculate that this priceless sculpture has been recovered by the great wyrm black dragon Shift who makes his lair within the depths of the marshes. If so, it likely serves as the centerpiece of his hoard.

Affiliated Orders: Bright Nydra has no orders or knighthoods dedicated in her name. Instead, the entire Marsh Drover people are considered "One with the Winter Moon."

Priestly Vestments: Bright Nydra's clergy dress in garb common to the Marsh Drover culture. They favor bright-colored clothing made from natural fibers, all of which are harvested from the Farsea Marshes and surrounding lands.

Adventuring Garb: When adventuring, priests of Bright Nydra dress practically, although they will not wear metal armor and shun metal weapons.

Specialty Priests (Moon Drovers)
Requirements: Wisdom 12, Charisma 15
Prime Req.: Wisdom, Charisma
Alignment: CG
Weapons: As druids
Armor: As druids
Major Spheres: All, animal, charm, elemental, healing, plant, sun, weather
Minor Spheres: Divination, travelers
Magical Items: As druids
Req. Profs: Navigation
Bonus Profs: Animal lore (cato blepas), boating

Granted Powers

- Moon drovers can speak with catoblepas (as *speak with animals*) at will.
- Moon drovers are gifted with 30 feet infravision.
- At 3rd level, moon drovers may cast *lower water* or *raise water* (as the 4th-level priest spell or its reverse) thrice per day.
- At 5th level, moon drovers may cast *charm monster* (as the 4th-level wizard spell) once a day.
- At 7th level, moon drovers may cast *moonbeam* (as the 5th-level priest spell or its reverse) once a day.
- At 9th level, moon drovers may cast *death gaze* (as the 6th-level priest spell) once a day.

Nydrian Spells
6th Level
Death Gaze (Enchantment/Charm)
Sphere: Combat
Range: 60 yards
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Instantaneous
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: One creature
Saving Throw: Special

This powerful spell is unique to the Marsh Drovers and the priests of Bright Nydra. A *death gaze* spell enables the spellcaster to attack with the deadly deathray gaze of a catoblepas.

Anyone who meets the eyes of the spellcaster in the round after this spell is cast dies unless a saving throw vs. death magic is made. Those who close their eyes or act with their eyes averted can still be affected by the *death gaze*, but a saving throw vs. death magic with a +3 bonus is allowed. This spell expires immediately upon the death of any victim or, regardless, at the end of the round following the casting.

The material component for this spell is the priest's holy symbol and a small chunk of death cheese (cheese made from catoblepas milk). The latter must be ingested as the spell is cast. ❑

Mr. Whiplash, I Presume?

LIVING CITY™ fame and infamy, part 2

The mechanics for fame for the LIVING CITY™ campaign, introduced in POLYHEDRON® Newszine issue 115, allows players and judges a means of tracking how well known LIVING CITY characters have become as a result of heroic actions they take. However, some characters are not always so heroic. For them, we introduce the concept of Infamy, which measures how dastardly your character has been. Infamy points are awarded by a judge when a character or characters do something cowardly or reprehensible and others could hear about it.

Judges do not make Infamy checks, nor is there a limit on how many Infamy points you can acquire. When a judge looks over your character and discovers Infamy points, she may ask you to explain what happened. Based on the NPCs and situations in the adventure to be played, and the number of Infamy points you have, the judge will decide whether the NPCs have heard of your character's dastardly deeds and how they will react. Simple for the player, somewhat more complex for the judge.

Infamy points will not appear in modules, unless an action clearly calls for one (such as burning down the Wizard's Guildhall). It will be up to the judge to decide whether you deserve one (or more) based on your actions. This is similar to the way Hero Points are awarded in LIVING JUNGLE™ adventures. Here are some examples of actions that may warrant an Infamy point:

- Causing the destruction of private property (such as burning down a building as a result od a miscast *fireball)*
- Being convicted of a crime in a public court (whether or not your character actually committed the crime)
- Stealing, provided someone could possibly blame the character for the theft
- Suffering a public defeat by inferior forces

Other situations could also warrant Infamy points for characters. Note that the character does not need to have done the infamous deed. It is only necessary that people *think* he did it.

Fame and the Null Category

The Fame system assumes that characters who routinely do good deeds will become known for those deeds by people who did not directly witness them. Fame is not necessarily a reward for adventuring; rather, it is a by-product.

It is possible, however, to adventure and not become known, but you must use a false name and often a disguise to do so. In effect, you have to create a "secret identity" to hide in. For those characters, we introduce the Null Fame category. If, during an adventure, your character in some way managed to remain anonymous, you may put your Fame point award into the Null category. Fame in Null cannot be used by a judge to affect NPC reactions, or for any other purpose. It is essentially gone, as if your character never earned it. The reason the category exists is so that a judge can compare your Fame totals in Null vs other categories; that tells the judge something about your character that she might be able to use later. A judge must agree with your decision to put Fame into Null, you cannot just choose to do so without the appropriate role-playing during the adventure.

Too Few Categories?

Some members have argued that there could be more categories for the Fame system. True, there could be. However, it would make the system too unwieldy to be useful as a judge aid, which is its intent. The system relies on judges to make decisions about gray-area issues, because we are not simulating real life. We are simply trying to provide an easy and workable way for judges to decide how well-known your character is.

Judges and Fame Use: Part Two

Here are some examples of how judges might use fame and infamy points in a game session:

1. While preparing for the tournament, make a note of which Fame categories will apply. Instead of making Fame checks, note how much Fame the characters have in the various categories, and decide for yourself whether an NPC has heard of the character(s). This allows you to control which PC(s) the NPCs have heard of, and decide in advance how the interaction will be modified.

2. Check Fame whenever the PCs are trying to be sneaky or use a false story to con someone. Unless the PCs involved are in disguise, there is a chance that some person in the background knows them, at least by reputation and description. This sort of recognition can make an encounter more difficult without making it impossible. Fame should not be used to punish, but there are consequences for everything the PCs do, and Fame is a way of making past actions catch up with the PCs at the wrong time. Again, check the main NPCs involved, and one check is sufficient to determine whether the background NPCs become involved. Choose the most appropriate category.

Judges and players should remember that the fame and infamy system should not become a nightmare of die rolls during each game session. Furthermore, players can only *suggest* that their character's fame (or infamy) may apply in a given situation; it is for the judges to decide whether or not it does. If used sparingly, and to promote a cool story, the fame and infamy system could enhance a LIVING CITY adventure. ❑

Elminster's Everwinking Eye

Dapplegate and Derlusk

by Ed Greenwood

The Border Kingdoms? A place to go if ye want to be forgotten, and to hide—as a forester, a farmer, a baron—or an emperor. Emperor of little more than a few cow-pastures, mind ye...but an emperor none the less, with a castle, crown, court, concubines, companies of armsmen, and all.

—Enobur Erthidrannus,
Sage Royal of Ruathym
said to a gathering of
merchants in Holgerstead
Year of the Turret

Elminster's enthusiastic elucidations continue apace (I'm fast running out of blank cassettes for the tape recorder!), and accordingly our exploration of the Border Kingdoms continues:

Dapplegate

This independent town stands on the northern border of Bedorn, and is slowly falling under the influence of that peace-loving realm. Borderers know Dapplegate as a pleasant place of cobbled streets and solid three-story stone buildings where merchants rule (in a council of forty that can never agree on much of anything) and dwell, filling the town with cheerful bustle at all hours.

Native Dapplans can sleep through anything thanks to the wagons and pull-carts that groan and rumble through the streets at all hours, and the hammerings and crashings of carpentry; this town never sleeps. Most businesses are open night and day, staffed in three shifts, busily selling all that Calimshan, the Tashalar, and more distant lands have to offer to Borderers. These same lands buy Borderer goods for export. These goods are transported via barges from wharves nearby to the north, along the lower banks of the River Scelptar. So marshy and insect-infested in the area around the wharves that no settlements exist there. Lizard men and muckdwellers battle for control of the territory, and no fewer than six companies of guardians based in Dapplegate provide protective escort duty for bargebound shipments.

Dapplegate's resident craftfolk are known for making good stormlanterns (of wrought iron or brass, with glass panes and hanging chains), adequate chain, and rough but sturdy crates and chests for the transport of bulk goods. While all of this makes Dapplegate a worthwhile stop for shoppers seeking a variety of wares (often an elusive quality in the Border Kingdoms), it would hardly make for an exciting place for the romantic or adventurous.

That need is fulfilled by Danchilaer the Mad Mage, a reclusive renegade sorcerer from Halruaa who dwelt in Dapplegate four hundred years ago. Some sages say the town grew up around his tower, after folk staying at the nearby Dapplegate Inn struck bargains with the sorcerer to protect them with spells in return for payments of money, cooked food, and lifting-and-carrying service around the tower.

The Mad Mage is now either a very long-lived human or an undead creature of some sort. His simple, slender tower stands dark and empty (except for occasional roaming bands of adventurers who come looking for treasure in its trapped, labyrinthine chambers and cellars), but Danchilaer remains an unseen, watchful presence in town. Once or twice a year, he magically abducts a single human resident or visitor and sets them a task somewhere in the Border Kingdoms.

If they succeed, he uses his considerable magical abilities to augment permanently their personal abilities in some way and returns them whence they came, charging them with a long-term goal or mission.

Some choose to follow his guidance, and others do not, but to both the Mad Mage remains a presence, appearing to them in dreams to give cryptic advice, or answering, when they call on him in great need, with a spell, spoken message, or whispered words in their minds.

Danchilaer appears as a tall, plain-robed man with a deep voice, whose face is always hidden by the pulled-down cowl of his robes. His true aims are unknown, but the tasks and goals he sets seem dedicated to the survival of Dapplegate, the Border Kingdoms (as a region of free realms, subject to no outside rule), and self-sufficient farming folk everywhere. He works against large armies, proud kings, and vast empires. Those who serve him are free to pursue their own lives, and don't necessarily know of others the Mad Mage has 'augmented.' (Danchilaer is not building an organized group of agents such as the Harpers.)

On the other hand, several successful adventurers and mages now contemplating retirement to the Border Kingdoms have begun to meet for drinks and converse at various taverns about the Border lands, as a sort of social club. More than once certain members of this group have acted together to foil petty rulers or stop unscrupulous mercenaries or merchants. Only the years ahead will tell if the Mad Mage has some larger plan, or intends to forge those he has aided into some sort of cohesive force. If he does, the Border Kingdoms could well be changed forever.

Visitors to Dapplegate are directed to the Place of Arrows (the central marketplace, the site of a long-ago battle between rival companies of archers), where the crowded stalls of traveling merchant are crammed together inside a ring of eight circular, drinking-ponds, each ringed by a waist–high wall.

Overlooking the Place of Arrows is Danchilaer's Tower, standing immediately northwest of the market in its own walled garden (which it shares with ancient, thick, stunted oaks; a cairn commemorating the Valiant Fallen of Dapplegate in the many wars that have

raged across the region; and, usually, many children of the town at play). Beside the tower is the round, turreted Council Hall, an ungainly pile of a building that has flung out wings in all directions over the years as kitchens, meeting-rooms, and rental storage lockchambers.

Facing the Hall across Lockwyvern Street is The Chased Unicorn (not, as some travelers think, "the Chaste Unicorn"), an inn offering superior dining and fairly luxurious appointments, including gaming rooms, private baths, and chamber service. Such accomodations are rare in the Border Kingdoms—and priced accordingly.

Most visitors stay at one of the three less expensive (and more spartan) inns just inside the town gates. Hard by Bedorn Gate is The Old Tin Tankard (not, despite its name, a tavern); just inside Easting Gate is The Watchful Warrior, and beside the River Gate is Mistfall House (which many folk in town suspect has something to do with the Harpers; known Harpers stay there when in town). The best tavern in town is Black Blasko's on Sharaghil Street; the most raucous and shady is Tarnalar's Tipple on Bloodserpent Lane.

A disturbing rumor has recently spread across the Border Kingdoms: somewhere in Dapplegate is the hidden tomb of Quarlin, a Halruaan wizard who specialized in making magical staves—lots of staves, which unleashed battle magics. Five hundred years after his death (about now!), Qualrin's tomb and bones will collapse into dust as a long-slumbering spell activates...but the staves buried with him (twenty or more, the tales insist) will survive—free for whoever finds them to take.

Just where this rumor came from, and how much truth is behind it, remain mysteries, but adventurers are converging on Dapplegate from all over the Border Kingdoms; finding accomodations is likely to be difficult for a while. There've already been several violent confrontations between persistent stave-searchers and suspicious merchants trying to protect their goods and property.

The increasing tension and violence between prying adventurers and newly-hired bodyguards and warehouse security forces has moved Master Merchant Nurath Cheldin of the Council to publicly decree that there is not now, nor has ever been, a Halruaan wizard's tomb in Dapplegate—and that adventurers would do well to hunt known monsters and treasures, rather than chasing after every wild tavern-tale their ears come across.

Prominent tavern-owner and fellow Council member Tilbar Tarnalar responded by issuing a statement that he knows of no fewer than seven hidden Halruaan tombs in town, and suspects that Dapplegate's cellars hold several—perhaps many—more, and that citizens should not hesitate to call on the Council for help if they encounter strange magic, or witness the use of any magical staff.

Derlusk

One of the busiest and best harbors in all the Border Kingdoms is located in the lee of the encircling Dragonsmoke Ridge, which curves around Derlusk on the west and north.

Many of the stout stone buildings of this fast-growing city climb the Ridge or are dug deep into it. Derlusk fills a natural bowl valley, and by night is a beau-

tiful vista of slate roofs and shimmering lanterns.

Almost all the exported wares of the Barony of Blacksaddle and Shandolphyn's Reach are shipped out to wider Faerûn through Derlusk, and the city is known for making its own swift, sleek 'wave runner' coastboats (preferred by smugglers and pirates for their speed, nimble helms, and low silhouettes when on the water), and for the salty 'Dlurn Paste' made locally from the small green dlurn fish, found in profusion in the harbor and in nearby inlets along the coast. Dlurn Paste is a revolting green in color, but smells marvellous, and makes a solid meal when spread thickly on biscuits—though its saltiness will quickly drive any diner who has more than a few bites to take up a tankard or two.

Derlusk is notable as a city of music, where bards are highly regarded and every inn, tavern, tankard-house, and breakblades club (where patrons fence for exercise and to gain skill at swordplay) has its own live musical entertainment.

Derlusk is also a city of scriveners, bookbinders, and book collectors, who've made The Faring Falcon bookshop and its rival, Fendelmer's Fine Folios, prosperous successes. Fiction—particularly narratives dealing in old, romantic notions of a Faerûn that never really was, and wild tales of other worlds, crystal spheres, and planes—are eagerly collected, lent (for fees and a book-deposit sum) and discussed by Derluskans. Parties are often held to celebrate the publication of a new book—or even the host's acquisition of an old title. Authors are treated like royalty, and revels are held to mark the anniversaries of their deaths. Scholars, sages, and limners have settled in Derlusk and created a shared world of interests that most Borderers dismiss as quite mad—or at the very least odd, eccentric, and frivolous. This is the place to come to find a copy of an old book, or to hire a rich collector to have his or her scribes make you a fresh copy of a rare work they won't let out of their most private rooms (expect to pay at least 100 gp/page, and thousands more for especially rare, valuable, or sought-after tomes; maps typically start at 1,000 gp each, and go up rapidly from there, with most selling at about 4,000 gp). There are also streetcorner shops where a new book can be had for as little as 6 sp, or passages copied out from old books in stock into a fresh chapbook for a customer willing to part with 12-25 gp, or double that for anything longer than a dozen finished pages.

Even the local farmers and laborers view many of the foreigners who visit Derlusk for its bookshops as harmless eccentrics; they even see them as fellow citizens of a sort. Although they may not share the foreigners' interest in scholarly pursuits, they rightly believe that an evening of music and entertainment in one of Derlusk's many fine inns makes a fellow citizen of nearly any traveler.

All of this literary interest gives Derlusk a whiff of the sophistication of far larger ports such as Waterdeep, Athkatla, and Calimport—and the city does boast one inn that can equal the hostelries of those larger centers: The Turrets At Twilight.

This superb establishment is an old seacastle, rebuilt from crumbling ruin by energetic (and wealthy) adventurers into a many-winged palace offering longterm rental rooms, simple traveling chambers, fully-furnished suites, palatial apartments, heated bathing pools, and a central ballroom with promenade galleries and balconies. Three dining rooms and chambermaid service bring meals to every hungry guest, and wine may be enjoyed by those willing to retire to Loasker's Lounge to eat strong cheese with it (no ale is to be had, and only patrons who've rented rooms are allowed in, to prevent a tavern atmosphere).

The Turrets is famous for hosting a MageFair—and surviving. Many pranks played then wreaked widespread damage or placed rooms, features, or even guests under nasty recurring enchantments—but the Seneschal of the Turrets, retired adventuress Amaryth Delbara, called in some favors and got Khelben 'Blackstaff' Arunsun himself, the Lord Mage of Waterdeep, to come in and clean up all of the undesirable magics. It is said that, among the usual rude illusions, poltergeist-like object teleportations, and creative curses, Khelben removed a polymorphed (and furious) ogre mage from the premises, closed several hidden *gates* that scheming mages had established in the wine cellars and best bedrooms, and an embarrassing tail that someone had caused to grow on Amaryth's behind.

For those not familiar with MageFairs, they are (now-annual, but formerly triannual or once a decade) wizardly get-togethers at which business (territorial agreements, research pacts, and sales of spells, items, potions, and information) is discussed, mages show off their prowess, masters find apprentices and vice versa, duels occur, and magical mischief abounds. By the very nature of things magical, these fairs are apt to get a trifle out of hand (for an account of a visit to one, see "Elminster At The MageFair" in the *Realms of Valor* anthology), and so are usually held in remote ravines, ruins, abandoned castles, or other venues where there is no general populace to be terrorized—or to attack sorcerous participants.

The fair held at the Turrets proved this to be a wise policy. Explosions and wild-cast spells were plentiful, at least one ship was sunk in the harbor, and a lot of property got transformed (however briefly) into odd things. Several magic items are rumored to be hidden still about the city, awaiting activation from afar by those who put them there, and at least sixteen deaths—of both wizards and Derluskans—can be blamed on the fair.

On the other hand, twelve local ladies who vanished during the fair are known to have been married and carried away by smitten mages...and at least one, the stablemaid Jonsra Burunmere, has over the decade since the fair gone from total ignorance of magic to outstripping her husband at the Art, to become ArchSorceress Supreme of the island realm of Shamandra. The most southerly of the three large islands off Altumbel, this tiny farming realm is due west of the city of Delthuntle. It has just entered into an alliance with Aglarond, a step ahead of a vicious Red Wizard attack that was only repulsed with the personal aid of The Simbul.

Derlusk still talks about that MageFair with a sort of proud nostalgia, but there doesn't seem to be great hunger to host another soon...which comes as good news to Borderer merchants, who'd like this safe, bookish, music-loving, bustling port to stay that way—and more or less in one piece.

❑

A World of Your Own

More things than are dreamt of, part 1

by Roger E. Moore

We looked at the idea of running an original AD&D® campaign set on Earth in the last two issues, focusing on a campaign derived from the AMAZING ENGINE® MAGITECH® game. For all its wonders, this setting was also quite limited in play—ironically, because it *has* so many wonders!

Despite the problems in maintaining game balance with player characters going to an advanced-magic or advanced-technology Earth, this idea has remained very popular with adventure designers. Look at the examples in the accompanying sidebar for proof.

We've established that Earth is a great place for a variant AD&D campaign. In this issue and the next, we'll look at original campaigns based on an Earthly setting once described by TSR, but not to the degree of detail found in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® or DRAGONLANCE® settings. These fantasy Earths are based on real history, so a good bit of historical research will make the campaign go all the better. But the DM must do more than thumb through textbooks; he must sift through facts in search of the gold of adventure, and keep those facts from obscuring that glitter. The central technique for world-building here is creative research.

A World out of Time

There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Eileen, a senior undergraduate student majoring in English literature, is in an AD&D gaming group with a half-dozen members. The current DM is burning out and asks if anyone else would like to run the group for a few months in an alternate campaign. Eileen quickly volunteers and sets to work on her own world.

The previous campaign was based in Cormyr in the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting. If a change is called for, Eileen wants to make it a notable one. Fascinated by the Elizabethan period in English history, she wishes to put her historical knowledge to use by running an original AD&D campaign set in England, using the HR4 *A Mighty Fortress* campaign sourcebook. This 96-page book, the fourth in the Historical Reference series, outlines the Elizabethan Age, Counter-Reformation, and Thirty Years War in Europe.

Eileen's late 16th-century England, however, is going to be a highly variant one. She wisely suspects that the gamers in her group will be put off by a purely historical campaign lacking magic, monsters, and mythical lands. (She suspects such a campaign would bore her, too.) The historical element will be kept as much as possible, because it gives the campaign a universally recognized look, mood, and flavor. Libraries are full of information on the Elizabethan period; getting historical, legendary, and mythic material relevant to the period is easy.

Sixteenth Century English attire

In fact, there is so much historical source material available that it can be overwhelming. Fortunately, Eileen already has a good understanding of the period from her nongaming studies and classical reading: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Spenser, etc. She elects to research only those areas relevant to an upcoming adventure, and to keep the adventure locations fairly limited. No sense in looking up ship construction if the PCs aren't going sailing, or in getting maps of London if they don't go there.

After considerable thought, Eileen writes down the broad outlines of her variant historical campaign. In brief, her major points follow (with side notes following bullets).

1. The campaign will have a limited lifespan, both in real time (a year or less, until Eileen graduates or the other DM takes over) and game time (the period from about A.D. 1550 to 1600).

• Game time is a common limitation of historical-based RPGs, whether they involve Camelot, the Old West, Prohibition-era crime-fighting, or Cold War spying. This limitation can be partly undone by using different groups of characters operating in different places at the same time.

Eileen plans to use an episodic set-up linking many of the important events of the 16th century; her adventures will each be about 1-10 years apart in game time. The limited span of history she's using encourages her to weave the highlights of the period into her adventures: the ascension of Elizabeth I; the struggle with Mary, Queen of Scots; the Spanish Armada; the colonization of America; and so on. Eileen will add fantastic elements (royal wizards, strange monsters, fairie courts, new islands, etc.) to these events, but will let much of real history occur as usual.

2. All PCs must be natives of this new world. (Note that this is exactly the opposite of the ruling for the MAGITECH world.) PCs with unusual or fantastic qualities appropriate to the period must be unique; there cannot be more than one of any particular nonhuman or unusual human character race in the campaign (one dwarf, one giant, etc.). At least half of the initial group of PCs must also be either of European origin or human. Players must work with the DM to generate characters for this campaign; no standard PC-creation system applies (i.e., you make it up as you go along!).

AD&D Voyages to Earth & Back

In addition to the different versions of Earth described in this column in the last few issues, the following Earth-based adventures should be noted. As variant campaigns go, these are *very* variant!

• Gary Gygax worked up the details for an AD&D adventure to an unnamed modern city in his column, "From the Sorcerer's Scroll" in DRAGON® Magazine issue #30. (A later column noted that the player characters in that adventure refused to go to the modern city once they realized what was happening!) Further details on modern-world campaigns were offered by Ed Greenwood in DRAGON issue #57, in "Modern Monsters: The Perils of 20th-Century Adventuring."

• In the old D&D® adventure IM1 *The Immortal Storm*, Immortal-level player characters must voyage to Chicago's suburbs and to Manhattan Island, about 1985, to pick up a few important items needed on their home planes.

• In DRAGON issue #100, the module "The City Beyond the Gate" describes a heroic adventure to recover the lost artifact known as the *Mace of St. Cuthbert*—now in a museum in modern London.

• The quasi-deity Murlynd from the GREYHAWK® campaign, as depicted in DRAGON issue #71 ("Greyhawk's World") and the 1983 WORLD OF GREYHAWK® boxed set's *Glossography*, has obviously visited the American Old West. His extraplanar home, revealed in module EX2 *The Land Beyond the Magic Mirror*, contains such amenities as a VCR and a stamp collection, so he's been hanging around other Earthly time periods as well, probably with some friends like Mordenkainen, Keoghtom, Heward, and (gasp!) Zagyg the Mad Archmage.

• Elminster of Shadowdale, spokeswizard for the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting, has magical gates in his secret hideout leading to Wyoming in the year 1894 and to Ontario in the present year. (See the SPELLJAMMER® accessory SJR2 *Realmspace*, pages 51-52.) Maybe Murlynd and Elminster party around in the Wild West together—a terrifying thought. Worse, maybe their 1894 Earth is that of the RAVENLOFT® Gothic Earth campaign.

• In DUNGEON® Adventures issue #21, heroes voyage to a land dominated by Greek deities: Arcadia in ancient Greece itself. (This should be the same world described in the Historical Reference Campaign Sourcebook HR6 *Age of Heroes*, and probably also the same place called the "canyon of centaurs," reached by a gate in the old AD&D module S4 *The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*.)

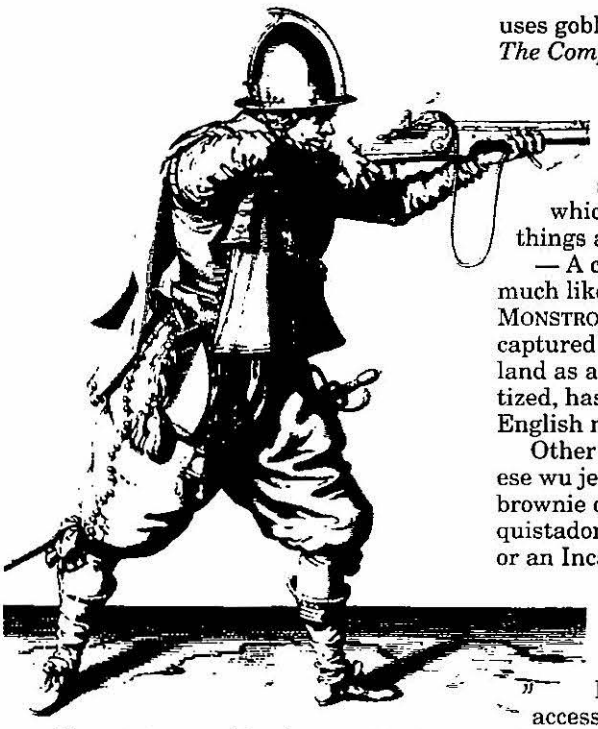
• An insurance salesman from (of all places) Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, is accidentally summoned and captured by townspeople on the border of Cormyr in the module, "A Question of Balance," in DUNGEON Adventures issue #14.

• Battles between AD&D characters and Nazi soldiers from the Eastern Front in World War II were recorded in *The Strategic Review* issue #5, in "Sturmgeschutz and Sorcery" and DRAGON issue #15, in "Monty and the German High Command" (later reprinted in POLYHEDRON® Newszine!).

• Certain *alternate world gates*, small magical items described in the ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA™ accessory, volume II (pages 501-502), open magical doors to Earthly environments that use non-AD&D rules systems from TSR: the BOOT HILL® Old West game, the GANGBUSTERS® Prohibition-era game, the TOP SECRET® modern-espionage game, and the GAMMA WORLD® postwar-future game. These items can be found in almost any AD&D campaign.

• And, lest we forget, there is one extraordinary NPC who originates from Earth and has visited almost every other campaign world: Baba Yaga, the ogre-witch of Russian folklore. Two detailed descriptions of her magical hut (one in the recent AD&D module *The Dancing Hut of Baba Yaga* and the other in "The Dancing Hut," in DRAGON issue #83) reveal various items that she has picked up when revisiting her old homeworld through the ages.

We will mercifully skip over the published sagas describing AD&D characters teleporting aboard a lost Earth starship called the *Warden*; D&D and AD&D characters visiting the remains of crashed starships on Mystara and Oerth (the starship on Mystara was definitely from Earth, and one of its crewmen became an Immortal); a tribe of blue mutant kobolds from an AD&D universe that inhabit a postatomic setting in North America (which appeared in this very newszine), and the appearance of Captain Blood, fresh out of the Bermuda Triangle. Whew!



• Though her world is human-dominated, Eileen allows for nonhuman races as well as non-European nationalities and religions, for the sake of increasing player interest in her campaign. She suspects white Europeans will be common choices as PCs, though there can be many sorts of these. Her world is also less male-dominated than the real world; female adventurers are not uncommon. She is also happy to consider other PCs such as:

— A black Ethiopian Christian from the empire of Prester John (a fabled character of medieval times, but a real person in Eileen's world).

— A wealthy young noble Muslim from Mughul India, touring England with one manservant, an elderly male NPC.

— A Scottish giantess, about eight feet tall, who is human but as strong as an ogre. (Everyone else in her family is normal.)

— A bearded Swiss dwarf, from an Alpine people who gave birth to the legends of dwarfs. (This constitutes a new human race, a branch of *Homo sapiens* like the Neanderthals; the dwarfs—not "dwarves"—are descended from Roman mining slaves.)

— A short, ugly man rumored to be a changeling, a faerie child left in place of a human child taken away to some magical realm. No one is quite sure whether to believe this. (*He* thinks he's human, but he is a true nonhuman and uses goblin-PC statistics modified from *The Complete Book of Humanoids*.)

— A wispy woman who is actually a half-elf; her mother was an Irish faerie who married an English sailor. She has faerie sight, which allows her to see invisible things at all times.

— A cyclops of roughly human size, much like the cyclopskin in the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome, that was captured in Africa and brought to England as a prodigy. The cyclops, now baptized, has been adopted by a rich English merchant.

Other possibilities include a Japanese wu jen (see HR4, page 47), a brownie or other fairie creature, a conquistador, a Native American warrior, or an Inca priest.

3. This AD&D campaign will not use material from the SPELLJAMMER®, RAVENLOFT®, PLANESCAPE™, or *Chronomancer* accessories. This is an important point because the above four are "linking" campaigns that connect different AD&D game worlds. Eileen wants to separate her campaign from all others. However, she does allow for the possibility of magical gates leading to other places, though not to standard AD&D game worlds. Gates might lead to different places on Earth, past or future periods in Earth history, or to the Moon (which is inhabited in this campaign).

4. The magic system used will be that presented in HR4, on pages 45-47 and 90-92. Wizards may use white or gray magic only; black magic (necromancy) is strictly for villainous NPCs. Clerics may be Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, or Jewish; none may use baneful spells (e.g., *cause light wounds*, *harm*), and *all* must behave as if of good alignment, preferably lawful good, even though alignment does not exist here for PCs (see #11, below). The cleric and wizard kits given in HR4 are permitted, with player-designed variations allowed if they fit the campaign. Alchemy, astrology, and numerology are developed as detailed wizard proficiencies. If a player made a good case for playing a witch (here, something like a druid), Eileen would accept it.

5. Psionic wild talents in rare individuals are possible, but psionicists from *The Complete Psionics Handbook* are not. No more than two wild-talent PCs are allowed at any time, and all of them *must* be human. (A half-elf or changeling is unusual enough!)

6. Nonmagical gunpowder firearms are allowed as normal for the period. Magical *smoke powder* does not exist. Any technological device known from this period is open for purchase, though certain devices invented up to about 1700 (e.g., calculating machine, phosphorus, telescope, steam engine) might also be allowed under special conditions.

• Eileen has modified her world's history a bit to allow for unusually advanced technology. The notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci and the futuristic writings of Roger Bacon, for instance, are published and widely read in her world, but were not in our own. More ancient works survived in her world as well, such as the complete Trojan War cycle and all of Aristotle's books.

7. Very few monsters from standard AD&D references will be used. Instead, original monsters based on the legends and lore of Elizabethan times (including medieval bestiaries and ancient myths) will be created. The griffons and manticores of Eileen's world won't be like "standard" ones, for instance. Normal animals, including those that existed in the 16th century but are extinct in modern times, will of course be found. (Quaggas, Florida cougars, Tasmanian wolves, passenger pigeons, great auks, Labrador ducks, and dodos are okay—but *no dinosaurs!*) Certain creatures, especially dragons, are widely rumored but almost extinct; they do not resemble the dragons of the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome.

8. Geographic changes include the addition of more and larger mid-Atlantic islands, creating fabled places known to Elizabethan times, such as Antillia, St. Brendan's Isle, the Isle of Brasil, Friesland, and so on. Atlantis is not known to exist here, but it appears in classical works by Plato, etc. Legendary places like El Dorado and Avalon might be included later, but will be kept secret for now except in rumors. One special adventuring spot comes from Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, in which "Arne Saknussemm . . . a learned professor of the sixteenth century" and an alchemist, discovers vast caverns under an Icelandic volcano. (Perhaps he will hire some PCs to accompany him!)

• Eileen makes it a point, too, to use real countries or place names that no longer exist, such as the Viceroyalty of New Spain (now Mexico), with its provinces of New Vizcaya, New Galicia, New Mexico, New Leon, Yucatan, and Guatemala. St. Augustine, founded by Spain in 1565, is now the oldest continuously inhabited European settlement in North America; the PCs might get to visit it, but they'll do so as English spies!

Norumbega (now New England) offers PCs the chance to meet with Hiawatha as he creates the mighty Iroquois Confederacy of Five Nations. Eileen keeps this region in mind, as she wishes to make an alteration in her world to allow the Five Nations to withstand European colonization. Perhaps the PCs will unknowingly help!

9. Historic events, places, cultures, and personages of the period must be worked into each adventure and must be relevant to the course of the adventure. The PCs, for example, might be asked by an Oxford professor to search for a lost notebook of Leonardo da Vinci, journey with Sir Francis Drake around the world (1577-1580), or hired by Sir Walter Raleigh to assist his Virginia colony at Roanoke Island in 1588. (The PCs are *certainly* going to meet Queen Elizabeth at some point!) Eileen's historical studies turn up many events not mentioned in HR4 that she can work into her adventures, like Tycho's supernova of 1572, the discovery of Nova Albion (California) by Drake in 1579, the heroic fight of the ship *Revenge* in 1591, and lots of solar and lunar eclipses. And who could forget the change from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar in 1582, which will make campaign timekeeping a nightmare because Protestant countries ignored the change?

• Given that adventures occur about 1-10 years apart in game time, PCs might age greatly during the course of the campaign. With each new adventure, players can have the option of running their old PCs, using new PCs who are their old PCs' relatives or friends, or using new and unrelated PCs. Family trees of PCs are possible. Events between adventures are determined by mutual agreement between the players and DM.

It is entirely possible (and even desirable) that the actions of the PCs will affect certain major events in the game world; see "The Living Galaxy" in issue #110 of the Newszine, pages 31-32, for an example involving the Roanoke colony.

10. Some historic events are modified to further increase the unusual nature and variety of the campaign. The many religious wars and massacres of medieval and later times are reduced in number and intensity in Eileen's Europe, largely thanks to the common ground shared by spellcasting clerics of every religion. Viking Christian colonies have survived in Newfoundland and Labrador; Iberian Christians fled to Antillia when the peninsula fell to the Moors; Prester John's Ethiopia is real. Some literary characters are allowed in the campaign as NPCs: Prospero from *The Tempest*, for instance, with Marlowe's Doctor Faustus and Puck from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

11. Alignment is replaced by religion in almost all magical effects known to the PCs. Thus, the *detect alignment* spell becomes *detect religion*, and alignment on character sheets is replaced by religious affiliation (Anabaptist, Jesuit Roman Catholic, Anglican, Russian Orthodox, Sephardic Jew, Sunni (Ottoman) Muslim, Puritan, Huguenot, Lutheran, etc.). PCs should generally act within the restrictions of their religions and may express tolerance for other religions. However, the *detect evil* and *protection from evil* spells do exist; they affect only evil supernatural creatures and not mortals. *No* alignment languages are used. Alignment still exists for certain role-playing purposes for the DM and players (e.g., PCs cannot commit evil acts without suffering for them, and some magical items are evil and harm any PCs handling them).

But Wait! There's More!

This is one possible variation on the world presented in HR4. Next month, we look at some reference materials for this campaign, and another DM will recast HR4 in an entirely different way, for an entirely different purpose. More later!

❑

RPGA® Network Club Program

Gaming with the RPGA Network gets even better when you belong to a Network Club.

The ROLE PLAYING GAME ASSOCIATION™ Network Clubs are special. Network clubs are able to participate in clubs-only competitions at conventions such as the GEN CON® Game Fair and WINTER FANTASY™ convention in the United States, and at other conventions elsewhere in the world. They can take part in the annual gaming decathlon, a year-long challenge of gaming, writing, and service events, leading to trophies, prizes, fame, and fortune! Clubs get discounts on gaming products. They participate in membership drives. Clubs are eligible to play-test new game products before they hit retail shelves; consequently, clubs can have a direct impact on the games themselves. Network clubs attract the best quality gamemasters and players to their memberships, a benefit to each and every club member. Best of all, clubs are great ways to meet with old friends, or to make new friends, friends interested in the same games, the same worlds, the same fun!

Rank of Club	# of Network Members
Fellowship	6–25
Guild	26–50
Conclave	51-75
Assembly	76 and above

The fee to charter a club is just $20! In exchange for this fee, the club receives great game products for its library. Clubs are also eligible to receive a special monthly mailing, keeping them apprised of all the latest happenings in the world of RPGA Network gaming, with club news and current decathlon standings.

Renewals are free, as long as the club keeps its address current with Network Headquarters, and files a club directory form each fall. To seek and hold a charter by the RPGA Network, a gaming club must have at least six members who are also current members of the Network.

For more information about Network clubs, or any other Network program, please call (414) 248-3625.

Please tell us something about your club:

Which role playing games does your club play?

Which other games does your club enjoy?

Where does your club meet?

When, and how often does your club meet?

Club Name:_____ **Club Phone: ( )**_____

Club Address:_____ **City:**_____

State/Province:_____ **Country:**_____ **Postal Code:**_____

Club President's Name:_____ **Phone: ( )**_____

Address:_____ **City:**_____

State/Province:_____ **Country:**_____ **Postal Code:**_____

When this application is completed, please send it, the $20 fee, and a list of Network members and their numbers to:

RPGA Network, 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva, WI 53147, Attn: Clubs Program

Don't miss the excitement! Join Today!

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Notes from HQ

Just Another Weekend in Ravens Bluff

In the month of April, a unique role playing event will involve almost 1500 RPGA® Network members, all playing through the same adventures almost simultaneously across the continent. This year's "Weekend in Ravens Bluff" convention will be held at twelve separate venues, from San Francisco to Orlando, from Honolulu to Toronto. And you are cordially invited to participate.

Here's a great opportunity for you to discover the fun of the Network's most successful program: RAVENS BLUFF™: the LIVING CITY™. And all you need to do to get involved is to contact one of the site coordinators listed in this newszine on page 31.

The participants in this "hands across America" sort of event will be playing their own player characters through five separate, member-written scenarios. You can choose to play one, two, or all five, even if you've never played in the LIVING CITY before—just join the Network onsite..

Ravens Bluff veterans will be standing by to help you create your character. Character sheets and creation guidelines will also be available. Several of these sites will be licensed to use the new magic item certificate software as well. Contact your site coordinator to find out.

For those of you in Europe, United Kingdom member John Brown is working to develop your own Living campaign, based around the recently decimated outpost of Sarbreenar. For more information, write to John at TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, UK.

Mail Order Hobby Shop

On January 15 1996, TSR's Mail Order Hobby Shop ceased operations. This raises a few issues: Where can I use my 10% membership discount? Where can I redeem my Gen Con® Game Fair and RPGA Network gift certificates? Is the Network still going to award prizes for tournament winners?

10% Discount

There are several local merchants which already offer a 10% discount to members; we'll post a complete list in a future issue.

Gift Certificates

While we're working on lots of ways to redeem those gift certificates, currently you can redeem them for certain things direct from Network HQ. Here are some suggestions:

- Renewing memberships
- Buying tournament rounds for your convention
- Purchasing LIVING CITY magic item certificates
- Subscribing to DUNGEON® Adventures and DRAGON® Magazine
- Getting back issues of the Newszine

Look for an order form for those and other items in next month's Newszine. In addition, the certificates are still good at the TSR Booth at the GEN CON Game Fair for buying new and vintage products.

Make a note: Older three-ply certificates expired almost three years ago. The last of the one-ply red certificates will be invalid by May of this year. The two-ply blue certificates which have been given out since last summer will remain valid until the end of this year's GEN CON Game Fair.

Network Prizes for Tournaments

As a result of Mail Order's closure, we have discontinued issuing gift certificates. Instead, we are sending out prize support to each and every convention to which we send tournaments. We will send adequate prize support for the predicted number of tables. Administering that support will be the responsibility of the convention's tournament coordinator. This is in addition to other support the convention has received through other parts of the TSR convention support program.

Communication with HQ

Several times in the past few weeks we've gotten friendly phone calls from contributors to the Newszine or the tournament program asking if materials have arrived safely. While we're only too glad to reassure those folks, answering those phones takes valuable time away from other ncessary tasks. If you're really concerned about your submission, please enclose a self-addressed stamped postcard, and we'll return it to you promptly.

While we take phone calls and we like mail, we love e-mail. This allows us a quick response time, while letting us choose what part of our day is devoted to the task. For those of you who cruise the information super highway, our e-mail addresses are: TSR.RPGA@genie.geis.com and rpgahq@aol.com.

Decathlon Update

The 1995 Club Decathlon wrapped up with a few twists, but ARC Fellowship came from behind to capture the crown. Their win did not rest solely on the "Most Sanctioned Tournaments" category, but their win in that event did help. The Player's Guild of Central Oklahoma finished a strong second, after leading the pack for most of the year. Newcomer DOGS, a Hawaii-based club, finished third.

Here is a complete breakdown of the points awarded this past year. If a club wishes more details about their own entries, an officer should write or e-mail Network HQ and we will be happy to provide the information. We will not disclose specifics of how other clubs did in the same event.

1995 Totals
ARC Fellowship (34)
Players Guild of Central Oklahoma (26)
DOGS (24)
Rathskeller Gamers (17)
DWO (15)
Knights of the Empire (11)
Legion of the SilverSheen (11)
Knights abErrant (10)
Far Flung Gamers (9)
Pacific Quest Masters (4)
The Club (4)
Fellowship of the Black Spot (4)
Midwest Masters (2)
FOG (2)
ORE (1)
LAMP (1)

Event Results

Tournament Play
Pandemonium '95
Ron Heintz, Knights abErrrant (4)

Winter Fantasy™ Convention
Craig Petillo, PGCO (4)

Total Confusion
Death Warmed Over (1)
Josh Spin, ORE (1)

Conn Con
Ray Delgado, Legion...Silver Sheen (4)
Scott Dulac, DWO (1)
Albert Lavigne, Knights...Empire (1)

ConTroll
Craig Petillo, PGCO (4)

Spring Revel
Tom Prusa Midwest Masters (2)

Weekend in Ravens Bluff
Steve Null, Far Flung (4)
Chris McGuigan, Pacific Quest Masters (4)
Elise Boegmann, DOGS (2)
Sherrie Miller, ARC (2)

Origins
Keith Symcox, PGCO (4)

DragonCon
John Richardson, ARC (4)
Steve Null, Far Flung (2)

DexCon
Dan Donnelly, ARC (4)
Glen Goodwin, DWO (4)
John "Zip" Elmstead, Rathskeller Gamers (2)
Donald Northness, Knights of the Empire (1)

Gen Con® Game Fair
Sean Flaherty, ARC (4)
Chris Ravelin, DWO (4)
Carol Robinson, Rathskeller Gamers (2)

Dire Consequences
Carl Longley, DWO (1)

Sooner Con
Scott Nicholson, PGCO (4)

Black and White Art
DOGS (5)
PGCO (3)
Knights of the Empire (1)

Living Jungle™ Tribe Competition
ARC Fellowship (5)
Far Flung Gamers (3)
LAMP (1)

Living Jungle Tournament
Rathskeller Gamers (6)
DWO (4)

Virtual Seattle Tournament
Knights abErrant (6)

One Round AD&D® Tournament
Legion of the Silver Sheen (7)
Knights of the Empire (5)
DOGS (3)

Multi Round AD&D Tournament
DOGS (8)
ARC Fellowship (6)

One Round Non-AD&D Tournament
Rathskeller Games (7)
PGCO (5)
Knights of the Empire (3)

Multi Round Non-AD&D Tournament
No entries

Club Newsletter
Fellowship of the Black Spot (4)
PGCO (2)
ARC Fellowship (1)

Most New Members
DOGS (6)
The Club (4)
FOG (2)

Most Sanctioned Tournaments
ARC Fellowship (8)
No other complete entries

1996 Competition

This year's Decathlon is already heating up; several clubs have entered events for the early part of the year. To remind you of some upcoming deadlines:

Tournament Play:
Weekend in Ravens Bluff 2 (March 15)
Twin Con (April 15)
Ben Con (team and individual events) (April 15)
Games Caucus (April 15)

Writing Events:

Black and White Art	March 31
LIVING CITY™ Villain	April 30
LIVING JUNGLE New Spell	May 31

Clubs should note that some events have multiple submission requirements, especially Service Events. There are clubs that lost points in last year's competition because they did not complete their entries. Please note all deadlines that apply to the events you are entering. ❑

Classifieds

ILLINOIS: I'm a 23 year old fantasy RPG GM/player looking for anyone interested in sharing GMing tips or discussing fantasy literature. Also, if you are in my area and are interested in laying, let me know. Write: Roy Penrod, 305 West Martin St, Grayville IL 62844

KENTUCKY: Attention Louisville area gamers! We're forming a Network gaming club and want your support. We want to do RPGs, live action, war games, and trading card games. Please contact VIGIL (Ventures in Gaming in Louisville), c/o Marsha White, 1935 Gardiner Lane, Apt F88, Louisville KY 40205–2836, or call (502) 366 9162 and ask for Barbara Chandler.

MARYLAND: I am a 16 year old male looking to join a gaming group. I am interested in AD&D® settings, *Middle Earth*, and *Warhammer*, but I'm willing to learn other systems. I'm relatively new and want to play more. Please contact Ryan Gerhardt, 2934 Aspen Hill Rd., Baltimore MD 21234–2112, phone (410) 882 2060.

MICHIGAN: A group of game masters are looking for players in the Oakland County area for AD&D (DRAGONLANCE® and FORGOTTEN REALMS® settings) and *RIFTS*. If interested, call John or Phil at (810) 366 9455; if there is no answer, please leave a message.

NORTH CAROLINA: Charlotte/ Gastonia area people wanted to play *Nuclear War* card game and GREYHAWK® Wars board game. Contact Rick by email at gloaming@interpath.com or call 704-824-7969.

OKLAHOMA: The Players' Guild of Central Oklahoma seeks interested gamers in and around the Oklahoma area. Currently in our sixth year, the PGCO emphasizes fun, cooperation, teamwork, and idea exchanges in all your favorite RPGs, fantasy and historical miniatures, and card and board games. We are also involved in playtesting games for ICE and other companies, and we publish a monthly newsletter called "Networks." Sound interesting? Send a SASE to: PGCO c/o John Foster, PO Box 75834, Oklahoma City OK 73147–5834. PGCO Web site: http://users.aol.com/JerandKar/PGCO/index.html.

OKLAHOMA: "Networks," the official newszine of the Players' Guild of Oklahoma is undergoing some exciting changes and we need your help! Have you ever wished to see your budding writing talents in print? Now is your chance! "Networks" is a bi–monthly publication supplied as a membership service to PGCO members, but now others too can access a sample copy free of charge through the PGCO Web site. A sample copy of "Networks" containing submission guidelines, ad rates, membership info, and more can be obtained online at : http://users.aol.com/ JerandKar/PGCO/index.html, or by writing: Networks, c/o PGCO PO Box 75834, Oklahoma City OK 73147–5834 (please send $1.50 for postage and handling).

PENNSYLVANIA: I am a 15 yr old male looking to start an RPGA® Network sanctioned club. Club will play AD&D line of games. Beginners welcome! If interested, contact Sam Hopfinger, 55 Decatur Rd., Havertown PA 19083; phone/ fax (610) 446 3671; email Samatar@aol.com.

FOR SALE: 1st edition rulebooks – DMG (good), PHB (good), FF (good), MM (excellent), MM2 (good), OA (good), DDG (2nd printing–no Cthulhu, excellent), WSG (near mint), DSG (excellent), DLA (excellent), MoP (excellent +), UA (fair, completely intact and usable, includes errata). Wish to sell as a whole set, $175 (U.S.)/ $225 (Can). Will pay book rate Canada Post ground to any Canada/ U.S. destination. Also seeking players interested in setting up RPGA Network tournament in south Saskatchewan, eastern Montana, western North Dakota. (306) 949 8824, FAX (306) 775 1437, email Jim.MacKenzie@f222.n140.zl.fidonet.org or 1:140/222@fidonet, or 165 Coldwell Rd, Regina SK S4R 4K7 Canada.

FOR SALE/PBM: FORGOTTEN REALMS accessory *City of Splendors* and PLANESCAPE™ accessory *A Player's Primer to the Outlands*. Also interested in starting a PBM; if you are interested, contact: Iguana King Inc., 201 S. Elm St., Hartville MO, 65667.

FOR SALE: 1st edition AD&D *Unearthed Arcana*. Like new. $25 ppd. Contact: Pam Smith, 2011 River Park Ct, Valrico FL 33594.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: SPELLFIRE® cards. I have a huge selection to choose from. Write or call for my want list. John Nichols, Rt 1 Box 175, Elk City OK 73644, phone (405) 225 7983.

CORRESPONDENTS WANTED: I'm a guy, I'm 32, and I'm looking for other mature gamers with which to correspond and exchange creative ideas. I've been a DM/ player for over 14 years in both the 1st and 2nd editions of the AD&D game, and I have only a little experience with other systems. Other related interests or topics of discussion include TV and movies, comics, sci-fi and fantasy lit, art, and models/ miniatures. Write William Sims, 3257 Gurley Ave., Gadsden AL 35903.

PEN PAL: Hello, my name is Corey LeMoine and I am 15 years old. I am interested in a pen pal. Anyone interested in fantasy please contact me at PO Box 196, Montgomery, LA 71454.

WANTED/ PEN PAL: I'm 21 yrs old and have just started playing AD&D. I am looking for the *Player's Handbook*, the DUNGEON MASTER® Guide, the PLAYER'S OPTION™ books (*Skills and Powers* and *Combat and Tactics*), and the DM™ Option: *High–Level Campaigns* books. I'm also looking for pen pals if you wouldn't mind writing me. Contact: Michael Engebretson, #245523, Oshkosh Correctional Institution, PO Box 3310, Oshkosh WI 54903–3310.

HELP!: Three months ago I purchased Eye of the Beholder for the Super NES. I've put in many hours on it since then, but I just cannot get past the third level. Any hints, clues, or mapped areas to get me moving further along would be great. Also looking for pen pals from all over. I'm 32 years old and have many interests and hobbies. Contact: Martin Meader, PO Box 606, Hartford VT 05047–0606.

Conventions

Norman Conquest 8, Mar 29–31, Norman OK— Held at the Oklahoma Memorial Union on the campus of the University of Oklahoma. Events include gaming, RPGA® Network events, readings by C.J. Cherryh, Jane Fancher, and Lynn Abbey. Costs $9 prereg, $12 at the door. Contact: Melissa Maurer, Room 215–A OMU, Box 304, 900 Asp Ave, Norman OK 73019.

Hawaii Hobbies Fair, Mar 30–31, Honolulu HI — Held at Radford High School, sponsored by the Honolulu Jaycees. Events include Network games, card games, miniatures, anime, model building, and more. Proceeds benefit Radford High School. Registration $5 at the door. Contact : Eric Kline, PO Box 90192, Honolulu HI 96835–0182.

Pentecon VIII, Apr 12–14, Ithaca NY— Hosted by Cornell Strategic Simulations Society, this con features a number of roleplaying (including RPGA Network games), card, board and miniatures games. Preregistration costs $7. Contact Pentecon VIII, c/0 Peter D. Bajika, 105 Eastern Heights Dr., Ithaca NY 14850 (email PDB6@aol.com).

Kulcon 5, Apr 26–28, Topeka KS— RPGA Network events, *M: tG* tourneys, *Highlander* championship, and guests Ed Greenwood and Robert A. Salvatore. Con to be held at the Ramada Inn Downtown. For more info: Kulcon, PO Box 4023, Lawrence KS 66046; email: Kulcon@ Elysian.net; WEB site www.kars.com/ Kulcon/.

NoahCon, Apr 27-28, Avon Lake OH — Aqua-Marine Resort, Miller Road, Avon Lake OH 44012. Events: Network games, RPGs, live action, *M: tG*, *Guardians* tournament. Contact Eric Vaessen, Matrix Games and Diversions, 5384 East Lake Rd, Sheffield Lake OH 44054. 216-949-5787.

DemiCon VII, May 3–5 1996, Des Moines IA—ACI is back for its fourth year at DemiCon with even more games and prizes and a healthy dose of science fiction frenzies. In addition to 24 hour gaming (the AD&D game, *M: tG*, *Killer*, *Australian Rails*, *Dragon Supreme*, and many RPGA Network events), there will be costume contests, filking, writers workshops, miniature painting, and a 24 hour con suite. At DemiCon, you run your game by your schedule, not ours. For more information, contact ACI at 1304 Boyd St, Des Moines IA 50316–1452 or call (515) 266 2358.

Mage Con North 2, May 3-5, Sioux Falls, SD — A complete gaming convention featuring all types and genres of games. Tournaments, advanced and beginner events. Events will include: *M: tG*, *Warhammer Fantasy Battle*, *Diplomacy*, *Pendragon*, and live-action RPGs. Also, costume, art, and painting contests; dealers area; and special guest Margaret Weis. For more information write: Mage Con North, P O Box 84828, Sioux Falls, SD 57118-4828, call 605-334-2855, or email MAGECon@aol.com.

LEHICON 6, May 3–5, Allentown PA — Held at the Days Inn Conference center. Events include roleplaying, card, miniatures and other games, RPGA Network games, and other events. Cost: $20 prereg, $25 at the door. Contact: LEHICON 6, PO Box 556, Horsham PA 19044. Please include a long SASE or 32 cents for postage.

Conjuration, May 3–5, Broken Arrow OK— Held at the Holiday Inn South. Contact: Patricia Conner, 1825 E 16th St, Tulsa OK 74104; phone (918) 748 8332.

At-Last!-a-Con, May 4–5, Ferguson MO—Events: RPGA Network events, LIVING CITY scenarios, *M: tG*, *Battletech*, *Star Fleet*, and more. Located at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 119 S. Florissant, Ferguson MO. Pre–registration costs $6 for two days. For more info, contact SAGA, PO Box 297, St Ann MO 63074.

Mage Con 4, May 4–5, Bellevue MI — Held at the Bellevue Conservation Club. Events include numerous Network games (LIVING CITY™, Virtual Seattle, LIVING JUNGLE™), *Star Wars*, and *Call of Cthulhu*. Pre–reg $18 (includes event fees except for $3 benefit). Contact: Mage Con 4, 127 S. William St., Bellevue MI, 49021.

ROC of AGES `96, May 10–12 1996, Charlotte NC—Held at the Sheraton Airport Plaza, this con features guest appearances by James Doohan (Scotty), Gunnar Hansen (Leatherface), and Barbra Leigh (Vampirella), among others. There will be plenty of roleplaying, card, and board games, including *Earthdawn*, LIVING CITY, *GURPS*, *Shadowrun*, *Champions*, *M: tG*, and others. Other activities include an SCA heavy weapons tournament, a costume contest/dance, and a charity auction. Costs are $15 until March 1, $25 at the door. For more information, contact ROC of AGES, 105 Honeywood Ct, Kissimmee FL 34743; phone (407) 344 3010.

SAGA 96A, May 17–20, Sussex NB (Canada)— Held at Mama's Two, Main St, Sussex NB. Contact: Timothy Smith (506) 433 6406 or write SAGA, PO Box 694, Sussex NB, Canada, E0E 1P0.

**Eclipse `96, May 24–26, Columbia MO**— Held at the Holiday Inn Expo Center. Events: Network tournaments, RPGs, card games, miniatures and a murder mystery. Scheduled guests: Tom Dowd, Tony DiTerlizzi, Lester Smith, Zeb Cook, Erick Wujcik. Cost: $18 before 1 May, $20 at door. Contact: Eclipse `96, 27 North 10th St, Columbia MO 65201.

GAMEX 11, May 24–27, Los Angeles CA — Held at the Los Angeles Wyndham Hotel. Events include numerous games, RPGA Network events, and other events. Contact: Strategicon HQ at (818) 848 1748.

3 Rivers Game Fest, May 24–27, Pittsburgh PA— Held at the Greentree Marriott. Events: RPGs (including Network events), regional *M: tG* tourney, other games. Guests: Peter Bromley, David Frank, John Bohrer. Cost: $19.95 pre-reg. Contact: Andon Unlimited, PO Box 1740, Renton WA 98057–1740; email: Andon@aol.com.

Twin Con '96, May 25-27, 1996, Minneapolis, MN— Spend the Memorial Day weekend with us — gaming at Twin Con, Minneapolis' biggest and best game convention. Our three-day

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Highland, IN 46322

A Weekend in Ravens Bluff 2
San Francisco, CA
Chris McGuigan
2010 Hillside Dr
Burlingame, CA 94010

CapCon
Columbus, OH
Patrick Connolly
2509 Deming Ave
Columbus, OH 43202

April 20-21:

Ville-Con
Maryville, MO
Sam Frazier II
611 North Buchanan # A
Maryville, MO 64468

Con-Troll
Houston, TX
Terry Hawkins
4734 Warm Springs
Houston, TX 77035

A Weekend in Ravens Bluff 2
Denver, CO
Ken Ritchart
1024 Sagebrush Way
Louisville, CO 80027

April 27-28:

A Weekend in Ravens Bluff 2
Columbia, SC
Neal Wilhite
7645 Garners Fair Rd #1009-F
Columbia, SC 29209

A Weekend in Ravens Bluff 2
Norman, OK
Craig Petillo
1544 NW 46íth St
Oklahoma, OK 73118

A Weekend in Ravens Bluff 2
London, Ont
Gregg Peevers
222 The Esplanade #431
Toronto, Ontario M5A 4M8

A Weekend in Ravens Bluff 2
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Eric Kline
P.O. Box 90182
Honolulu, HI 96835

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Bob Farnsworth
419 Elkwood Ct
Orlando, FL 32825

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Don Weatherbee
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fest is filled with role-playing games, board games, HMGS miniature events, game demonstrations, a spacious dealer's room, and much more. RPGA Network events include AD&D® Feature, Masters, and Grand Masters, Shadowrun, Paranoia, LIVING JUNGLE, and four LIVING CITY events (three of them first-run). The LIVING CITY tournament, *Small Threat*, will net one lucky character a very special dagger. And the character's player will receive a replica medieval dagger courtesy of Mere Dragons, the tournament's sponsor. The convention, under new management, is across the parking lot from the Mall of America, so plan to take some extra time to visit this great shopping attraction. For more information on the convention, or to pre-register, contact Jeff Hammerlund, 107 West Chicago Street, Algonquin, IL 60102. Individuals willing to judge Network events should contact Cisco Lopez-Fresquet, 3827 Lindale Ave. North, Minneapolis, MN 55412. Judge prizes will be awarded, including a special "Top Judge" prize sponsored by Ral Partha.

IlliniCon '96, May 31–Jun 2, Urbana, IL — The Urbana Gaming House and Hendrick Dorms host our fifth annual convention at the U of Illinois. Network events, *M: tG* tournaments, RPG by NASCRAG, board and strategy games, Doc Riley's two–round AD&D Open, free on–site painting contest, movie lounge, dealers, auction, and 48 hours of non–stop gaming. Air–conditioned rooms only $12 to $18 per night. Weekend admission $5, additional $5 buys player tickets for all sessions. No pre-registration; con opens at 5pm Friday. For room reservations call Nancy at 217-328-8000, M-F 8:30-3:30. For event or con infor email <greggh@uxl.cso.uiuc.edu> or write UGH, 904 W Green St, Urbana, IL 61801.

Glathricon, Jun 28–30, Evansville IN — One of the RPGA Network's oldest conventions returns this year with several Living setting campaigns, novice– to paragon–level events and a very special game of *Sim City* (our memorial game to remember and honor our friend Steve Glimpse). Held at the Holiday Inn–Airport. Contact: Glathricon, 2600 Hillcrest Terr., Evansville IN 47712.

Origins `96, Jul 4–7, Columbus OH— Held at the Greater Columbus Convention Center and Hyatt Hotel. Events: RPGs, Network events, *M: tG* National Championship, numerous other games and events. Guests: Phil and Kaja Foglio, Douglas Niles, Jeff Grubb, Kate Novak. Cost: $34.95 pre-reg. Contact: Andon Unlimited, PO Box 1740, Renton WA 98057–1740; email: Andon@aol.com.

DARK CON III, Jul 19–21, Oklahoma City OK — This convention will be held at the Central Plaza Hotel. Events include RPGA Network games, computer gaming, LARP *Vampire*, and *M: tG* tournaments. For more information, contact: Darkmoore Inc., 624 SW 24th, Moore OK, 73160; phone (405) 794 7624.

Quincon XI, Jul 19–21, Quincy IL— Held at the Signature Room in the Franklin Square. Featuring Illinois *Highlander* State Championship tourney and Network games. Cost: $15 for the weekend. Contact: Great River Gaming Guild PO Box 3892, Quincy IL 62305–3892; phone (217) 224 3415.

GATEWAY 16, Aug 30 – Sep 2, Los Angeles CA — Held at the Los Angeles Wyndham Hotel. Numerous roleplaying, card and miniatures games, RPGA Network games, and other events. Contact: Stategicon HQ at (818) 848 1748.

Wincon, Sep 13-15, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada — Ramada Marlborough Inn. Events include: *Circus Imperium* Tournament, *Highlander* Tournament, *Wyvern*, *Rage*, AD&D game, *Star Trek* CCG, *Star Wars* (if released), *Warhammer 40K* and *M: tG*. Other activities: Auction (including charity portion), Dealers' room, guests. Memberships: $20 until July; $225 July-Aug 31, 1996; $30 at the door (all prices in Canadian funds). Contact: Wincon, P O Box 28073, 1453 Henderson Hwy, Winnipeg, MB R2G r#9, Email D.Derksen@Genie.geis.com. Telephone: 204-668-5614.

Shorecon `96, Sep 27–29, Asbury Park NJ— Held at the Berkeley Carteret, 1401 Ocean Ave Asbury Park. Events include a masquerade, auction, Network games, and more. Cost: $20 pre-reg, $25 at door. Contact: Multigenre Inc, 266 Spruce Dr Brick NJ 08723; phone (908) 262 9249.

The Ravens Bluff Trumpeter

WAR RAVAGES MILITARY

Trumpeter reporters attended the most a recent Council of Lords session, where the discussion centered on the sudden attack recently suffered by the city and the events subsequent to that attack.

Admiral Sir Willem Maximillian Fleetwood, the commander of the city's navy, reported that the navy was in desperate shape. Of eight heavy war galleons in the fleet, four were sunk or burned in the harbor. The two on patrol have not been heard from since the attack, and are presumed lost at sea. The remaining galleons were stolen by pirates and sailed out of the harbor. Of the fleet's ten caravels, six were destroyed. The remaining four, on patrol in groups of two, are still missing. At least two were sunk, because a survivor reached the city on the third day after the attack. Captain Maelstrom Gondolon, who commanded the *Trumpet of Tempus*, reported that nine pirate caravels and smaller ships converged on his patrol in the evening of the day before the attack. The men of Ravens Bluff fought well but were outmaneuvered and overmatched. Both ships in the patrol were sunk, and Gondolon believes that he was the only survivor.

The fighting on the docks resulted in casualties of over 60 navy sailors, bringing the total number of naval casualties to nearly 400. Fleetwood estimated that at least 50 Harbor Patrol officers lost their lives, leaving only 10 officers in that branch of the Watch.

Lord Charles Blacktree IV, the Field General, reported for the army. Fighting was heaviest at the north wall, where over 500 defending troops lost their lives. An additional 200 adventurers and mercenaries perished. Survivors counted 1,296 enemy slain in the assault, a combination of goblins, hobgoblins, orcs, and human mercenaries. A surprisingly large number of the slain were spellcasters. Blacktree estimates the total attack force at more than 1,700. The Stand was also attacked, where only 20 lives were lost in repelling the invaders. Blacktree attributed this to the design of the fort and the skill of the company stationed there.

During the fighting, when the invaders at the walls began to falter, Lord Marshal Gaius Varro led a small force which broke through the enemy and made for the Stand. These are the only men not accounted for; Lord Marshal Varro disappeared without a trace somewhere along that ride.

Blacktree also gave a report from spies watching an amassed mercenary army on the plains. This force did not seem to be involved in the attack. It did not appear to be strengthening the forces that attacked the city, nor did those forces flee to regroup with this one. However, Blacktree stated that this army moved its camp to a position less than a day's ride from the city the morning after the attack.

Lord Chancellor Arvin Kothonos reported that Tantras refused to become involved in any way. The Tantras ambassador stated that he did not condone the attack, but his government had decided to devote all forces to the defense of their own city. Procampur, on the other hand, agreed to commit 1,000 troops to aid Ravens Bluff. However, in the days that followed, a landslide blocked the pass through the Earthfast Mountains completely, and the troops could not get to the city. Since sea traffic is unsafe, the Procampur troops have been recalled while a mining party clears the pass road. Sarbreenar reports continued infrequent humanoid incursions, a possible threat to the mining party.

Lord Mayor O'Kane, after listening to these reports, rose slowly to his feet. The Lord Mayor himself fought at the walls, and suffered a serious injury. He waved off the priests who came to heal him, claiming that others needed the magic more than he. His injury still not healed, O'Kane limped around the seated lords and spoke. "These reports, though disheartening, serve only to show us that this is far more than a goblinoid raid. There is a cunning intelligence behind this effort. The city has been weakened and cut off from assistance, but we are not helpless. Call the reserve troops into active duty, and spread notices to hire additional mercenaries. We will rebuild, and we will be victorious."

MERCENARIES NEEDED

The army is hiring mercenaries to supplement the fighting forces. Report to Castle Iron Guard for a contract and assignment. The city needs help in this time of need; answer the call to arms. *Player characters may join the army for service during the war. Send a letter or e-mail to Network HQ stating the character's name, level and class, applicable skills, and preferred service. This will not be played out anywhere, but when the war is over you will receive experience points according to randomly generated military engagements. Your character could die during military service; you have been warned.*

A "FIFE" IN TIME SAVES NINE

On a recent visit to the front, Deputy Mayor Belanor Fenmarel rescued nine children from certain death. The children became trapped atop a damaged section of wall, and the Deputy Mayor risked his own life to climb up and retrieve the children. Afterward, the Deputy Mayor disappeared into a cheering crowd to return the young children home.